

THE CRITIQUE OF SCHLEIERMACHER'S THEOLOGY

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A THESIS

Presented to
the Faculty of Divinity
University of Edinburgh

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

By
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April 1959



FOREWORD

Four years ago I became interested in Schleiermacher's theology. I think that it is Schleiermacher who first elaborated a theology based on the general truth of man. Two and a half years ago when I first came to Edinburgh, it was with the purpose of furthering my Old Testament studies. But then, I actually ignored the fact that the most urgent need for the Younger Churches in the Far East is not Old Testament scholars who are competent to write books on the interpretation of the Old Testament in terms of their ancient literary backgrounds, but Christian apologists who are able to answer questions put before them by the modern idealists of to-day in the Eastern countries.

Perhaps I ought to mention here the structure of this thesis, which consists of two parts. The first part may seem not immediate relevant to my specific subject, but it is my purpose first to present a study of the theological thought of Schleiermacher before I come to my proper research area. Since Schleiermacher's theological system is most adaptable, it is essentially vague and it seems to me most necessary to make this presentation. It seems important to make sure what Schleiermacher actually says before turning to Brunner's and Barth's criticism of him, as well as to provide evidences for their critique.

Many thanks are due to Prof. Dr. Torrance who suggested to me this subject for my studies at Edinburgh. I realize now how much I have been benefited for my future service for the Church of Christ in the other part of the world by taking up the study of this most worthy subject.

I am most grateful to my supervisors, Prof. Dr. Torrance and Prof. Dr. McIntyre, for their encouragement and their guidance of my work. Their suggestions and their corrections are most valuable. I am also thankful to Dr. Lamb, the librarian of the New College, who helped me in many ways to find the books I needed. Furthermore, I must mention the generosity of Prof. Dr. Brunner who so kindly gave me his only copy of the second edition of his book, Die Mystik und das Wort, which is out of print at the present day and is most difficult to obtain.

I wish also to thank the Rev. Logan Kirk, Mr. Duncan Macdiarmid and the Rev. Edward Johnson, for help with my English.

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PART I.
A CRITICAL PRESENTATION OF
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INTRODUCTORY

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was an excellent, original, and extraordinary Christian thinker of the 19th Century. He was a rare genius with an artistic and creative mind. His religious enthusiasm and very individual background, his scientific knowledge of the modern spirit, "his wealth of moral ideas, his faculty of applying divine principles to the wants and events of the time, and the deeply penetrative and persuasive character of his words,"¹ all exercised a remarkable and beneficial influence in his own day and have since left their mark on Christian thought.

His writings reveal that he lived during the age of general unrest² coming long after the Reformation and apparently falling under the influence of the Enlightenment (Aufklärung). People were led to think in different ways: everything had to be subjected to rational examination or to re-evaluation. Therefore, people became very confident about their ideas, or subjective reasoning, and this brought them to despise their entire cultural background. Religion, as well as other areas, could not escape this fate. Rationalism arose among religious circles as well as in the whole culture of the age. There were some reactions to this rationalism or, more properly, counter-reactions of rationalism and other movements to each other. The

1. Robert Munro, Schleiermacher, Personal and Speculative, (Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1903), p.82.

2. Wilhelm Dilthey, Leben Schleiermachers, Band I. (Berlin und Leipzig: Vereinigung wissenschaftlicher Verleger, 1922), "So steht Schleiermacher in der Mitte aller Bestrebungen seiner Generation. Er umfasste das Grösste, was seine Zeit bewegte, was die Generation vor ihm vorbereitet hatte." pp.xxviii f.

religious aspect of this reaction was Supernaturalism. Rationalism attacked their frozen confessional heritage "under the envelope of the traditional system"³ with serious criticism, saying that the religious organ, i.e. reason, and reason alone, should dictate personal beliefs. It formed its own system and made knowledge of principle the only acceptable form. Thus rationalism had degenerated into religious indifference because it merely viewed the Christian faith as but a product of rationalistic thinking. On the other hand, the supernaturalists thought that they should confine themselves to organizing conscientiously the historical materials inherited from their predecessors, while trying their best to rejuvenate and accommodate them to the taste of the contemporary theories.⁴ However, they conceived the Christian faith as a doctrinal authority given us from without; they thus "had petrified into a lifeless, hereditary acquiescence in an historically transmitted faith."⁵ Neither of these theological interpretations was satisfactory for the combined factors of the inquisitive spirit and the emotional aspect of humanity or even for either one singly against the other. This questioning of the confessional heritage came after the Reformation and in the wake of the modern scientific spirit. Christian thinkers had been seeking for a new form of expression of religion in order to meet the challenge of their contemporaries.

Schleiermacher, in light of all this, never ceased to labour towards the reconciliation of Christianity and science,⁶ for he realized that "a definitive divorce between them would bring

3. F. Lichtenberger, History of German Theology in the 19th Century, (Transl. by W. Hastie), (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1912), p.65.

4. Ibid., p.24.

5. Frederica Rowan, (Transl. by) The Life and Letters of Schleiermacher, (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1860), I. p.xv.

6. Lichtenberger, op. cit., p.130; cf. Dilthey, op. cit., p.641.

in its train the most fatal consequences."⁷ He took up a position of modern idealism as the basis of truth upon which he opposed supernaturalism and introduced the Christian elements of feeling, warmth, and devout personal experience to the dry rationalism. His endeavours have often been misunderstood; such was the case even in his lifetime.⁸ But Schleiermacher's great contribution to religion is to be assigned to the level which is above the contradiction and antagonism of rationalism and supernaturalism.⁹

In the time of Schleiermacher religion had been corrupted or artificialized by each of the mental tendencies of the age. The state of theological scholarship was very unsatisfactory; people were tired of the old, lifeless dogmas on one hand and they equally despaired of the arid scepticisms which attempted to usurp their place on the other.¹⁰ Religion was regarded as an antiquated prejudice, or on the other hand as a moral agency or an intellectual system. Schleiermacher with his sensitive and inquisitive mind, his understanding of man as an emotional being possessed of something more than mere thought and will, knew that a true religion must plumb the innermost feelings and instincts of man, and that shallow Enlightenment (Aufklärung) had no correspondence¹¹ with the deepest longings of the human heart. In his Manifesto of Religion (Reden),¹² he rightly claimed for religion not only an independent but also a universal and necessary place in human experience; he refused

7. Lichtenberger, op. cit., p.130.

8. Ibid., p.65.

9. Ibid., p.142.

10. Munro, op. cit., p.62.

11. Johannes Wendland, Die Religioese Entwicklung Schleiermachers, (Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr, 1915), "Die Aufklärung übersieht den innersten Quellpunkt der Religion im Gemüt, in dem Sinn, der das Ewige im Zeitlichen ahnt und anschaut." p.228.

12. Reden Ueber die Religion an die Gebildeten unter Verächtern (first appeared in 1799).

to defend it on any basis other than religion itself. As he says: "I fear religion is only comprehensible through itself."¹³ Religion is essential to human life, it is not "a mixture of fragments of metaphysics and ethics"¹⁴ which try to distort or obscure its original spirit. It is the religious feeling that constitutes the central and kindling point in the entire area of life, therefore religion is "not given for cold analysis but to be lived in and enjoyed."¹⁵

Schleiermacher himself admitted that he was a philosopher and a Christian, he writes: "In point of understanding, I am a philosopher; for to be such is to exercise the original and independent activity of the understanding, and in point of feeling I am religious and a Christian, and have entirely renounced all heathenism, or rather I have never possessed any."¹⁶ Regardless of whether he is considered as a great theologian or as a philosopher of religion, his excellent background in philosophy led him to approach the Christian faith from a philosophical viewpoint, except perhaps at a later and more mature stage of his thought.¹⁷ Schleiermacher was vitally influenced as well by the contemporary Romanticism.¹⁸ Here Schlegel's concept of individuality, which tended to spiritualize nature,¹⁹ influenced him and it was Schlegel who led him to an advanced study of literature and art which in turn widened the scope of his knowledge.²⁰

13. Schleiermacher, On Religion, Speeches to its cultured despisers, (Transl. by John Oman, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1893), p.238. This book is referred to as "Speeches."

14. Speeches, p.276.

15. Hugh Ross Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, (London: Nisbet and Co., Ltd., 1937), p.43.

16. Rowan, op. cit., II. pp.280f.

17. O. Pfleiderer wrote that "in the two decades which lapsed between his Discourses and his Glaubenslehre, Schleiermacher had thrown off the extravagances of Romanticism, and had brought his entire mode of thought much more into accord with the faith of the Church." Pfleiderer holds that the nature of the book Glaubenslehre is more theological than philosophical. The Development of Theology, (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co., 1890), p.104.

This contemporary movement, in spite of its many defective aspects, powerfully advocated the inner spirit of individual dignity. Although Schleiermacher has his own style of organization of theological ideas which is altogether independent of other styles, yet both his study of philosophy and this movement so regulated his thought²¹ to an extent that he himself even seemed to be aware of its influence and though he tried to escape from its entanglements in his interpretation and systematization of Christian doctrines, yet he failed to do what he intended. His theology is heavily coloured by this movement and characterized by his study of philosophy.

Schleiermacher, during his writing of the Reden, once wrote in a letter: "We are all victims of our times, and each person is so in a sense peculiar to himself."²² One could easily wonder why his sermons are not quite consistent with his theological thought and ask how such a powerfully inspired preacher²³

18. The Romanticism was a reaction to the dry rationalism: it protested against the supremacy of intellect and reason and glorified the imaginative and the natural; it reinforced human life with fresh interests and creative power, thus liberating the inner impulses of the soul.

19. Schlegel, Philosophie des Lebens, p.85., quoted by J. B. Robertson in the Philosophy of History by F. Schlegel, (London: Henry G. Bohn, York St., Covent Garden, 1846). "Nature, too, is a book written on both sides, within and without, in which the finger of God is clearly visible: a species of Holy Writ, in a bodily form---a glorious panegyric, as it were, on God's omnipotence, expressed in the most vivid symbols." p.60.

20. Dilthey, op. cit., pp.268f.

21. "Wir erblicken nun Schleiermacher inmitten der mannigfaltigen philosophischen Bewegung der Zeit, als Annehmenden wie Ablehnenden." Ibid., p.333.

22. Rowan, op. cit., I. p.190.

23. Dilthey, "Schleiermacher war ein geborener Redner. Die höchsten Wirkungen seines Genies waren von der Kanzel. Nach allen Schilderungen waren sie mit nichts zu vergleichen, was man seit der Generation Luthers an Einwirkung von der Kanzel aus in Deutschland erlebt hat." op. cit., p.76.

could write such a theology from which revelation is absent.²⁴ It is because Schleiermacher lived in an eventful age of uninspired rationalism that he fell a victim to it; he was busily engaged with apologetic purposes;²⁵ and because his endeavours at this task all showed an evident and intimate relation to his time. Munro points out that "it was principally in the religious sphere that he influenced his age and is an influence still."²⁶

Schleiermacher's intention was to help the people "to re-discover in religion that which had a function and a value of its own, independent of culture and criticism."²⁷ Religion, according to him, belongs to the very nature of man. It is an inborn capacity, in the sense that man is absolutely dependent and inevitably becomes conscious of Eternity. From the start Schleiermacher wrestled with the great problem of "reconciling his religious experience, which, under Moravian influence and example, had been very real, with the critical philosophy which had won his intellectual consent." As Selbie pointed out, that "he found the solution of his problem in giving to the feeling, on which he believed his experience to be based, an equal importance with the ideas and theories arrived at by purely rational process."²⁸ We must remember that Schleiermacher, even lying on his death-bed, admitted: "I feel constrained to think the profoundest speculative thoughts, and they are to me identical with the deepest religious feelings."²⁹ He thus confidently reconciled the free investigation of science with the religious consciousness of human instinct, without the confusion which

24. Mackintosh says: "To Schleiermacher, on the whole, revelation is only another name for human discovery." op. cit., p.71.

25. Horace Leland Friess, Schleiermacher's Soliloquies, an English translation of the Monologen with a critical introduction and appendix. (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1926), p.xxxix.

26. Munro, op. cit., p.19.

might easily have been caused by the contemporary movements of his age.

Although, on the whole, his interpretation of Christian faith is incomplete and his theology is regarded as one-sided and of too exclusive an anthropocentric emphasis,³⁰ his work is not easily overlooked. Whether one now believes that his approach towards religion was right or was overemphasized on one side, it certainly marked in its day a new era in the history of dogmatics, and yet it bears certain values and some sort of significance for students of theology. He actually served as a stimulant to theological thinking. It was Schleiermacher who first introduced a new method and a different outlook to the task of reconciling the traditional doctrinal system from the standpoint of the independence of religion and of the evangelical religious experience.³¹ His importance lies in ^{his} having inspired much the work of rejuvenescence of Protestant theology, and in Schleiermacher one observes the first real effort of Christian theology to come to terms with the modern spirit.³² It is scarcely an exaggeration to recognize him as the father of modern scientific theology.

This part consists of five chapters, Chapter One will discuss a general survey of his starting-points; Chapters Two, Three, Four and Five, the cardinal themes of his theology

27. W.B. Selbie, Schleiermacher, (London: Chapman and Hall, 1913), p.4.

28. Ibid., p.3; cf. Rowan, op. cit., I. p.57.

29. Rowan, op. cit., II. p.337.

30. J.L. Neve, A History of Christian Thought, (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1946), pp.114; 118.

31. George Cross, The Theology of Schleiermacher, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1911), p.104.

32. J. Arundel Chapman, An Introduction to Schleiermacher, (London: The Epworth Press, 1932), p.15; cf. John Baillie, The Interpretation of Religion, An Introductory Study of Theological Principles, (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1929), p.29.

respectively. It must be pointed out that owing to the strong unity of his theology, some expressions which first appeared in Chapter One, will from time to time, inevitably be found in these following chapters.

CHAPTER I

METHOD¹ AND UNITY

1. Aesthetics and piety as the origin of religion, not dogmatics or traditions.

Aesthetics is the fundamental attitude in one's approach to religion. Religion, therefore, is essentially aesthetic. That is to say that it is a "sense and taste for the Infinite."² The genuine form of religion is the intuition (Anschauung) of the Universe; Schleiermacher then defines religion thus: "It is neither thinking nor acting, but intuition and feeling [Gefühl]."³ It will regard the Universe as it is." When man, as a finite being, encounters the Infinite (Unendliche), religion takes its form: "It is reverent attention and submission, in childlike passivity, to be stirred and filled by the Universe's immediate influences."⁴ In all this, man, at least originally, must be seen as a part of the Whole (das Ganze) and as being receptive to the action of the Universe. Oman points out that according to Schleiermacher: "Religion...is neither metaphysics nor morals, but as essentially a part of human nature as either knowledge or action."⁵ Thus, religion is a part of human nature and human nature is a part of the great Whole; all is articulated and identified. The aesthetic feeling in religion is, therefore, a process of awakening man's sense for and awareness of the Universe.

1. In regard to Schleiermacher's method, the writer feels that his starting-points are to be first found in the Reden rather than in the first parts of his Glaubenslehre which is but a modified or elaborated work at a later period of his life.

2. Speeches, p.39.

3. Referring to these two terms: "intuition and feeling," Baillie points out that "in the second edition of the Speeches the distinction is retained in one passage and then allowed to lapse; in the Christian Faith intuition...entirely disappears and the new phrase 'immediate self-consciousness' (unmittelbare Selbstbewusstsein) is introduced as equivalent to feeling." op. cit., p.205.

We then determine the nature of religion and fix its boundaries: religion is essentially the contemplation (Betrachtung) of the religious (Frommen); the contemplation is "the immediate consciousness of the universal existence of all finite things, in and through the Infinite, and of all temporal things in and through the Eternal." Religion is to seek this and find it in the natural and its operation. As Schleiermacher says: "It is to have life and to know life in immediate feeling, only as such an existence in the Infinite and Eternal. Where this is found religion is satisfied."⁶ The true criterion of religion is affirmed as one's sense for the Universe, and not any externals of religion. Selbie comments on this point: "There is no necessity to seek for any outward guarantees for religion beyond this immediate feeling, for all such guarantees tend to lower the conception of religion and make it depend on something less than the highest."⁷ Thus dogma is denounced and religious discipline but slightly regarded.⁸ This is due to human effort which tends to belittle the content of das Ganze. In his Speeches, Schleiermacher did not appear as "the defender of a dogma or a creed, of a priesthood or a Church. His purpose was higher." As Munro puts it: "Religion, he taught, is inward, of the soul, independent of holy records, dead traditions and political systems." Schleiermacher felt that if "the doctrines and the ceremonies, and the uses of religion which they mistook for the thing itself, were in reality not religion at all: they were simply its external and necessary manifestations."⁹

4. Speeches, p.277.

5. Ibid., p.xxxii.

6. Ibid., p.36.

7. Selbie, op. cit., pp.48f.

8. The writer would suggest that later Schleiermacher, in his Glaubenslehre, modified this unfettered and extravagant romanticist-flavored denunciation of dogma and religious discipline.

9. Munro, op. cit., p.58; cf. Speeches, p.87.

According to him, dogmatics arises primarily out of the demands of the religious consciousness. Religious men are throughout historical because of their sense of intuition and their centre of religion. But their religiousness does not provide a standard faith for others: it cannot be regarded as a decisive sacred source for others who have the same standing in the Universe, but is in fact the continual source of great misunderstandings.¹⁰ Schleiermacher says: "This has misled almost everyone and distorted the view of almost all religions,"¹¹ since "religion never appears quite pure; its outward form is ever determined by something else."¹² When referring to the character of religion, he adds: "Religion is of course finite, and therefore subject to imperfections, but it must be apparent to you that, in a healthy state, man cannot be represented as acting from religion or being driven to action by religion."¹³ Religion bears one's very own stamp and arises from man's intuition of the Universe. Piety is the essential measure of one's religiousness.

Schleiermacher thus turned down the traditional validity of dogma and directed attention instead to man's inner life. This does not mean merely the emotional side of a man, but something far more real and effective which needs to be cultivated ---the mystical side of human nature must not be left out.¹⁴ Schleiermacher stated that "religion...in its own original, characteristic form, is not accustomed to appear openly, but is only seen in secret by those who love it."¹⁵ Religion is in man: it is to be "considered from the centre outwards, that is according to its inner quality, it is an expression of human nature,

10. Speeches, p.236.

11. Ibid., p.237.

12. Ibid., p.33.

13. Ibid., p.59.

14. Ibid., p.133.

15. Ibid., p.27.

based in one of its necessary modes of acting or impulses or whatever you like to call it."¹⁶ And, on the other hand, man is in religion: "It is found only among those who live in it as their element, and ever advance in it without cherishing the folly that they embrace it all."¹⁷ Its mystical absorption is twofold: religion absorbs man and man absorbs religion. Its action is therefore reciprocal and identical.

Therefore, "all pious emotions exhibit through feeling the immediate presence of God in us"; but "the existence of God generally can only be active, and as there can be no passive existence of God, the divine activity upon any object is the divine existence in respect of that object."¹⁸ By this, he means that originally our being contains a divine component. By this mystical theorizing, Schleiermacher posited a harmony of the inner man which would issue forth in selfless devotion to the highest aims.¹⁹

With regard to Schleiermacher's more decisive attitude toward, or more mature concept of, dogma in relation to his theological method, we note that he actually holds the opinion that if piety originates from conviction and if conviction will, in turn, originate from clear and complete thinking, the description of such thinking will become the content of dogmatics. If, on the other hand, piety itself dominates this thinking, then dogmatics will take its true origin from piety. Schleiermacher very confidently asserts that "the description of human states of soul is the basal form of doctrinal proposition."²⁰

16. Ibid., p.13.

17. Ibid., p.238.

18. Ibid., p.115.

19. Selbie, op. cit., p.27.

20. Mackintosh, op. cit., p.67; cf. Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, (Edited by H.R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart, Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1948), p.76. This book is referred to as Christian Faith, unless otherwise indicated.

Dogma may claim validity only insofar as the religious man possesses it in his inner state of mind. No matter what form doctrines may take, they are in all forms so ultimately and exclusively based in the emotion of the religious self-consciousness as actually to be unable to arise where this self-consciousness does not exist.²¹

2. Individual experience and the mystical concept as two sides of one and the same religion, the function of dogma eventually restored.

It is individual religious experience that mystifies Schleiermacher. To him the subject and object, and thought and the topic of thought, are presupposed as united via the self-consciousness. His epistemology here has its forerunner in Immanuel Kant. Since the condition of our knowledge is only limited to the sphere of the phenomenal, and we have no knowledge of "the thing-in-itself" (das Ding an sich), Schleiermacher acquiesces to the limitation of having to start with experience. For him, subjective experience is the key to objective knowledge,²² even though he must also affirm that "we are something more than mere thought, and all that we are thus otherwise, nay, even thought itself, can become for us the object of thought. Now if we call that concerning which we think being, we are at once being and thought."²³ Here we observe that Schleiermacher, with his theory of the subjective unity of the self-consciousness of thought and being, also works out an objective unity in virtually the next breath. He posits two

21. Christian Faith, p.78.

22. As Friess commented on Schleiermacher: "Existence per se is infinite being, and hence unknowable, but phenomena exist in and through it." op. cit., p.123.

23. Quoted by Munro: Schleiermacher, p.153, (Dialectics, p.54).

elements in the self-consciousness: "the one expresses the existence of the subject for itself, the other its co-existence with an Other."²⁴ One ventures to ask whether there be, for Schleiermacher, any difference between the knowledge of the transcendental and that of the formal. People might easily mistake in him a little world all his own, as could be the case if he started from the viewpoint of subjective individual experience and then maintained that religion is but a matter of contemplation of the Universe. But Schleiermacher presupposes the existence of the objective in the subjective, man being but a part of the whole and essentially one of the elements of the All. His theory makes sense only if a true religious significance be imparted to it, with a mystical concept presupposed. Otherwise, the whole system is but a matter of immanence. Schleiermacher sees the religious experience as caused by the Unknown, and the religious content as resting upon a given ground. The important key to religion is expressed in a typical phrase: "feeling of absolute dependence." But if one asks on what one shall depend, one finds that Schleiermacher has not precisely pointed this out.²⁵

Schleiermacher does insist that religion must be one's own, that it is elementary and authentic to human nature. Religion is not a derived datum: it is not thought or will. It is the subjective individual experience stretched out and, so to speak, melted into the realm of Eternal. It is already true to

24. Christian Faith, p.13. In this line of thought, it may be as well to point out that Schleiermacher essentially agrees with Hegel's wild speculation that "reason is real" or even vice versa is permissible except perhaps he puts it in a slightly different way. cf. John McIntyre, The Christian Doctrine of History, (London and Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), p.16.

25. The farthest we can get from Schleiermacher in this aspect is: "The consciousness of being absolutely dependent, or, which is the same thing, of being in relation with God." Christian Faith, p.12.

oneself even before one can discern for oneself the "I" and the "It", and this fact makes religion anterior to philosophy and ethics. In this negation of philosophy and ethics as identifications of religion, Schleiermacher probably wrote with Kant or the whole Rationalist movement in mind.

Schleiermacher's concept of individual life essentially views man's individuality as bound up in humanity as a whole (*das Gesamtleben der Menschheit*). He explains that in religion all things issue from the individual life---"the more individual, the more effective"---and sees all common elements as arising simply from "observing affinity and connection."²⁶ It is important to note that Friess has pointed out that Schleiermacher emphasizes "a type of experience in which there is productive, inner continuity between the individual and the universal."²⁷ Pfleiderer asserts that such claims of individuality are of permanent value as "a principal criterion of true theological education that the theologian should remain conscious of the individuality of his way of looking at things, and should renounce all claims to doctrinal authority of universal validity."²⁸ In this connection Wendland further points out Schleiermacher's importance: "He is and remains the great teacher of the significance of individuality for Christianity."²⁹

From his youth Schleiermacher was profoundly influenced by the Moravians, so much so that even though he later renounced them, he called himself a Herrnhüter of a higher order.³⁰ The

26. Speeches, pp.82; 262.

27. Schleiermacher's Soliloquies, p.128.

28. Development of Theology, p.105.

29. "Er ist und bleibt der grosse Lehrer der Bedeutung der Individualität für das Christentum." Die Religiöse Entwicklung Schleiermachers, p.242.

30. Dilthey, "Er ist dem Herrnhutertum eigen, dass die Frommigkeit in ihm Familienleben, Gemeinde, Lebenseinrichtungen, alle Kunst und alles Denken durchdringt. Schleiermacher hat sich einen Herrnhüter höherer Ordnung genannt." op. cit., p.420.

religious experience had been ever true and real for him throughout his life, generating his concept of infinite subjectivity which dominated the whole of his theological thought. But Schleiermacher, knowing well the limitation of all human attempts at the analysis and synthesis of religion, frankly reminds us that he has taken us as far as anyone can possibly go. "Here," he said, "is the end and summit of religion for all to whom humanity is the whole world. But consider that in your feeling there is something that despises these bounds, something in virtue of which you cannot stay where you are. Beyond this point only infinity is to be looked into."³¹ Here we see that Schleiermacher began with an individual experience of the spiritual life and developed toward an apprehension of mysticism.³² Thus the feeling or the immediate self-consciousness in religion is a dominant factor in the religious realm, although it is free from all traditional doctrinal authority, and yet for Schleiermacher, particularly in The Christian Faith, the feeling is one of dependence. It seems to be free from all human efforts which would tend to degenerate its very essence, and yet it is absolutely dependent at this more advanced stage of its development. To apprehend this, Schleiermacher stressed the importance of a doctrinal system. Oman remarks: "Thus the mind can make its feelings the object of its thought, and doctrines arise. Religious ideas are reflections on religious feeling. This is the conception he works out in the Glaubenslehre."³³ This is said because Schleiermacher believes this feeling of absolute dependence to be "the result of the operation of the Universe, of

31. Speeches, p.82.

32. Dilthey, "Wenn der Sinn nun auf das Unendliche gerichtet ist, so entsteht Religion. In ihr versenkt sich das Auge des Geistes in das Unendliche, Eine, Ewige, willenlos, reflexionslos." op. cit., p.340.

33. Speeches, p.xliii; cf. Lic. Hermann Mulert, Schleiermachers Sendschreiben (über seine Glaubenslehre) an Lücke, (Gießen: Verlag von Alfred Töpelmann, 1908), p.17.

personal experience, not merely of personal excitability."³⁴ One cannot afford to overlook a very profound significance in it. It would not be going too far to deem his so-called "feeling" as the point of contact of the human with the divine, or as Otto named it "divination."³⁵ It is mystical because it has divine element in it. Schleiermacher is conscious that there must be some way of knowing it, even though he admits that knowledge is determined by existence no matter who might claim the contrary.³⁶

Schleiermacher actually did not change the basic principle laid down in the Speeches; he merely developed it into an assertion that the highest knowledge comes through feeling. He had already mentioned in his Speeches that the knowledge of faith is probable. He spoke in a challenging voice: "You would not agree, you would never grant that our faith is as surely founded, or stands on the same level of certainty as your scientific knowledge! Your accusation against it is just that it does not know how to distinguish between the demonstrable and the probable."³⁷ Thus, according to Schleiermacher, we do have a knowledge of faith, but, human knowledge and experience have their definite limitations, we can know only what is intelligible to us.

3. Feeling as the rudimentary cause of universal religious-faith (allgemein-religiösen Glauben),³⁸ common to all religions.

34. Speeches, p.xliii.

35. Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy, (Transl. by John W. Harvey, Humphrey Milford: Oxford university Press, 1923), p.221.

36. "Our knowledge does not determine the existence of a thing, but is determined by it---then we have at least an indication as to how to avoid as far as possible too great a humanizing of the divine knowledge." Christian Faith, p.223.

37. Speeches, p.30.

38. Wendland, op. cit., pp.1-5.

Since religion is primarily an human element, it is universal and necessary to human life. Religion is a great spiritual phenomenon; a quality of mankind's inner life if, "according to the definite attitude and form it assumes in particular cases, it is a product of time and history."³⁹ Schleiermacher felt that the significance of the religious consciousness of all religions could not be ignored, all of them being equally manifestations of human life even though they were not all of equal value. Schleiermacher tells us that the "multiplicity of religions is based in the nature [Wesen] of religion." He regards it as self-evident that "no man can perfectly possess all religion" and that, because "men are determined in one special way, religion is endlessly determinable. But it must be equally evident that religion is not dismembered and scattered in parts by random among men, but that it must organize itself in manifestations of varying degrees of resemblance."⁴⁰ Any religion, furthermore, that would resign its infinity could only appear among men indeed in sorry form, in that event, religions are only "a vague, sorry, poor thought that corresponds to no reality."⁴¹ Human religious expression is always deficient and incompetent as an instrument of the divine, yet the divine element in the religious consciousness would not be negatively influenced by such a deficiency. The inadequacy of this deficiency can have influence only on the human side: it always reacts upon mankind. But, if one be willing to perceive it, this insight regarding the divine element in the religious consciousness can always be re-discovered. Thus Schleiermacher says: "I would have you discover religion in the religions. Though they are always

39. Speeches, p.13.

40. Ibid., p.212.

41. Ibid., p.217.

earthly and impure, the same form of heavenly beauty that I have tried to depict is to be sought in them."⁴² Furthermore: "You will find that in the positive religions alone a true individual cultivation of the religious capacity is possible."⁴³ In explicating the basic relations of other religions to The Religion, Schleiermacher shows that all have in their inner organic unity the common element of feeling, an element which is immediate and effective, and real and true for all and in all. It is unnecessary that the Deity should be presented as a distinct object.⁴⁴ With such a presupposition Schleiermacher ventures that as many individuals as can feel may have just as many religions, though they be religions without God preferably to religions with Him. Schleiermacher's concept of the origin of religion is pushed in the Speeches to a point which is not simply artistic or even mystical, but utterly fantastic. What, seen from a more mature vantage point, does Schleiermacher actually mean? Mackintosh comments: "Feeling is a mode of objective apprehension, a species of emotional perception or awareness of spiritual things, and God is viewed as confronting the soul in His real and infinite causality."⁴⁵ And Selbie continues: "It is through feeling, that the immediate and original existence of God is presented to us," Schleiermacher is "far more interested in the subjective presence of God with us, than in any objective certainty that we can attain about him."⁴⁶ However, we see that Schleiermacher himself liked to express his conviction: "true feeling is the highest attribute of man,"⁴⁷ an attribute to be understood as the approximating element which links the connecting part to the whole,⁴⁸ or as the door by which to enter

42. Ibid., p.211.

43. Ibid., p.217.

44. Ibid., p.50.

45. Types of Modern Theology, p.48.

46. Schleiermacher, p.47.

47. Rowan, op. cit., l. p.306.

48. Speeches, p.82.

into a new world. Such ideas are presented in a more poetic and novel vein⁴⁹ in his book Christmas Eve,⁵⁰ in which Ernest says:⁵¹

We become conscious of the inmost ground and of the inexhaustible power of a new untroubled life, and that in the first germ of it we at the same time behold its fairest blossom and even its highest perfection. However unconsciously it may exist in many, the wondrous feeling connected with the miraculous cannot be resolved into anything else than into this concentrated vision of a new world.⁵²

Thus this highest human attribute, as he calls it, is the most significant important avenue whereby we apprehend this wonderful spiritual phenomenon. At this stage, it is still a very artistic approach, since Schleiermacher sees religion and art, especially music, as closely related. And it will not be going too far to say, they are twins,⁵³ they co-operate in this process of contemplation of the Universe.

4. Becoming as the evolutionary nature of specific Christian faith (spezifischer Christusglaube),⁵⁴ only The Religion possesses it, not the other religions.

It is understood that religion is at once one's very own and something universal. Through the common possession of the religious consciousness, all religions are to be approximated as the sum of Religion which appeared and varied in different forms according to their stage or direction of development.

49. Dilthey, op. cit., p.xxix.

50. Christmas Eve, (English Translation by W. Hastie, Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1890).

51. In the Christmas Eve, Schleiermacher was represented by several persons who are his different elements of thought in the dialogue; cf. Christmas Eve, p.77.

52. Christmas Eve, p.66.

53. Schleiermacher says: "Were I to compare religion in this respect with anything it would be with music, which indeed is otherwise closely connected with it." Speeches, p.51.

54. Wendland, op. cit., pp.2f.

This is why Schleiermacher reminds us never to forget that "the fundamental intuition of a religion must be some intuition of the Infinite in the finite, some one universal religious relation, found in every other religion that would be complete, but in this one only placed in the Centre."⁵⁵

According to Schleiermacher, this universal religious consciousness is originally receptive to the action of the Universe;⁵⁶ and the existence of God in us can only be active,⁵⁷ with these two points in view. In this case he means that all mankind is destined to be incorporated eventually into this All.⁵⁸ The force of incorporation is Christianity. This very nature of Christian faith is summarized by Cross in the following passage: "this faith contains within itself the impulse to unlimited expansion and the power to appeal to the receptivity of all men."⁵⁹ Undoubtedly Schleiermacher adopted the modern thought of the time to explain the ethical life of religion. Oman has pointed out the effect of Kant's epistemology, viz., the two great implicit conceptions of Idealism and Evolution⁶⁰ which Schleiermacher felt attracted to apply at this point, thus interpreting the Christian life as an awakening life or a situation in which "the new life is present as something in the process of becoming."⁶¹ Soteriologically, Schleiermacher views man's state as but a continuous personal life in the shaping of man's own activity. Regeneration is but an assumed turning-point

55. Speeches, p.237.

56. Baillie, "According to Schleiermacher's psychology, then, mental life begins in a purely passive reception of impressions from the surrounding universe." op. cit., p.205.

57. Speeches, p.115.

58. Friess, "The work of humanity is promoted throughout the world; everyone feels the influence of others as part of his own life." For they all are "members of a great organism, and whatever they may have done severally, is instantaneously consummated as its work." op. cit., p.52.

59. The Theology of Schleiermacher, p.129.

60. The Problem of Faith and Freedom in the Last Two Centuries, (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1906), pp.197ff.

61. Christian Faith, p.476.

at which the continuity of the old ceases and that of the new begins. Similarly, by sanctification he means the growing continuity of the new life and the steady weakening of the old life.⁶² It is not a sudden change, but a gradual one⁶³ of ever advancing progress. It is a victory of the good principle over the bad: it is an inward deliverance of man's higher divine nature⁶⁴ from the hindrances of his lower nature; it is a renewal in the individual life as evoked and sustained by Christianity, i.e. the moral community, the foundation of which must in turn be traced to Jesus. Pfleiderer says that Schleiermacher's system of salvation agrees essentially with Kant's philosophical doctrine.⁶⁵ Mackintosh points out that his "underlying assumptions are those of a monistic and evolutionary optimism. Continuity, rather than crisis was Schleiermacher's guiding thought."⁶⁶ It might be interesting to note that Schleiermacher, even at an early age, believed that God has created men for a striving perfection: "For God cannot want to punish men eternally because they have not become perfect, if He apparently did not create them for perfection, but only to strive after it."⁶⁷ The Christian life is assumed to have "the possibility of a continued progress in the potency of the God-consciousness, while denying that its perfection exists anywhere, we can also no longer maintain that the creation of man has been or will be completed, since undoubtedly in progress thus continual perfection remains always only a bare possibility."⁶⁸ The present writer feels

62. Ibid., pp.476f.

63. Ibid., p.678.

64. Dilthey, "Das Christentum ist nichts anderes als das höhere Selbstbewusstsein der Menschheit von ihr selber und ihrer Aufgabe." op. cit., p.793.

65. Development of Theology, p.118.

66. Types of Modern Theology, pp.71f.

67. Dilthey, "denn Gott kann die Menschen, die er offenbar nicht zur Vollkommenheit, sondern nur zum Streben nach derselben geschaffen hat, unmöglich darum ewig strafen wollen; weil sie nicht vollkommen geworden sind." op. cit., p.31.

68. Christian Faith, pp.378f.

the above passage to be in accord, in this respect, with the Christian spirit as revealed in the New Testament.⁶⁹ The Christian attitude is to pursue perfection, although human ability may only assume to perceive perfection. Real perfection is viewed as one views the horizon at the ocean's edge from on board a ship. It seems not to be too far away, but all we may do is to aim at and not to reach it. According to Schleiermacher, this might be an analogy of the creative act, which is ever continuous, having completed a certain state and intending to continue toward another and still another as each successive state is concluded.⁷⁰ It might be pointed out that Schleiermacher does not mean to deny that our striving for good can bear fruit. On the contrary, our attitude of pursuing the good implies always the possibility of pursuing that which is better. Schleiermacher formulated this conception not merely to follow the modern spirit of the time as just another modern idealist, but it may also be seen from his basic conception of the nature of religion.⁷¹

69. Luke 17:10

70. Friess, "The rationalistic ideal of science is maintained as expressing an unattainable perfection of one of man's eternal interests. But since it is clearly recognized to be both an unattainable and a one-sided interest, there appears in Schleiermacher's philosophy a certain antithesis or tension, very characteristic and fundamental in all German thought of recent times, between the supposed claims of order and system, on the one hand and the supposed claims of life and being, on the other." op. cit., pp. xxf; cf. p. 165.

71. It was found in Schleiermacher's Speeches, even some twenty years ago, that he reserved the right to state that because mankind has no real knowledge of religion, religion is a mystery to man, remaining on a higher-than-human level. He says: "What we feel and are conscious of in religious emotions is not the nature of things, but their operation upon us. What you may know or believe about the nature of things is far beneath the sphere of religion." It is because "the Universe is ceaselessly active and at every moment is revealing itself to us." Speeches, p. 48. Thus, not only is religion expressed as a representation of "the exhibition of the Infinite" in human life, but it also is presupposed that the Universe is ceaselessly unfolding itself, in which case the uncertainty of our knowledge of religion is twofold: for our knowledge is then inadequately expressed

The word "perfection" (Vollkommenheit) itself, as used in this context, is to him essentially a contradiction in terms; for, according to his concept, it is but "an aim for perfection," and the word "perfection" has no human co-ordinate.⁷² It is but a stimulation of effort for our continual progress. Actually according to Schleiermacher's basic principle of religion, he has warned us that "anything beyond this, any effort to penetrate into the nature and substance of things is no longer religion, but seeks to be a science of some sort."⁷³ To criticize Schleiermacher as having "humanized and moralized the work of redemption in an entirely healthy way"⁷⁴ without noticing his honest and difficult attempt to reconcile Idealism and Realism is to state only a half-truth. Schleiermacher himself maintains that since man does not or cannot know the real nature of religion, even while and although he is inevitably conscious of it, the only really reconciling way to find it is to have apprehended it in feeling. Thus, a feeling of becoming perfect is essentially and eventually his interpretation of the Christian life: "An infinite holiness is the aim of Christianity. Never content with its attainments, it seeks even in its purest productions, even in its holiest feelings, traces of irreligion and of the tendency of all finite things to turn away from the unity of the Whole."⁷⁵

Therefore, Christianity is superior to all other forms of religion, and its distinctiveness and its most effective nature is partly due to this noblest attitude of ever seeking and

from our side; and from the side of the Universe it is in a state of moving or acting. That is why Schleiermacher even later allegedly adopted an evolutionist viewpoint, deeming it an appropriate attitude for Christians in their pursuit of perfection.

72. "For perfection cannot be obtained by adding together things that are imperfect." Christian Faith, p.379.

73. Speeches, p.49.

74. cf. Selbie, op. cit., p.184.

75. Speeches, pp.243f.

never being satisfied with what is found, even after having arrived at its highest attainment. It was, in fact, originally proposed for Christianity to establish man's incapacity and his redemption, and their connection with each other, on one hand and the work of redemption universally and completely accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth on the other.⁷⁶ A Christian's life is in a struggling condition which is the process of salvation, and in this process its basic principle is automatically worked out, and its destiny advanced, a destiny already determined by Jesus and sealed through His successful work of redemption. In Christianity, religion is fully idealized just because "through its original postulate, perpetual warfare against all that is actual in religion is presented as a duty that can never be sufficiently fulfilled, and just because the ungodly is everywhere operative."⁷⁷

5. Christianity as modification of religious-consciousness, together with method of dogmatic treatment.

The religious consciousness, i.e. the immediate feeling within the Christian experience of absolute dependence, is the essential origin of all doctrines which, in turn, are merely a record or product of the Christian consciousness.⁷⁸ Mackintosh says:

The development and the characteristic facts of the Christian mind are Schleiermacher's theme; he is speaking throughout of the believer's religious states or affections, as they testify of this or that beyond themselves. Not the creative self-revelation of God is the object of his study, but the modifications of the feeling of absolute dependence, as that feeling takes shape and colour within the Christian Church. Thus doctrines look in than out.⁷⁹

76. Christian Faith, pp.55f.

77. Speeches, p.243.

78. Barth, "Die christliche Lehre war, ist und wird sein ein Produkt der christlich-religiösen Affektion des menschlichen Gemütes, die sich u.a. in dieser Weise zu äussern pflegt." Die Theologie und die Kirche, (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1928), p.140.

79. Types of Modern Theology, p.74.

Cross has summarized his method of dogmatics in this sentence: "Christianity is a modification of the self-consciousness, Christian doctrine will be the expression of that self-consciousness and all alleged doctrines of Christianity must be tested by the same."⁸⁰ Doctrines serve, of necessity, as a means of communicating the religious knowledge (or, more explicitly, of imparting the Christian experience to knowledge). This does not mean that Schleiermacher has completely changed his attitude towards dogmatics from his earlier romantic denunciation of dogma in the Speeches.⁸¹ Therefore, there is no evident or ultimate contradiction in the reconciling of certain emphases, viz., as to the first and essential factor of religion, with that expression of the Christian spirit which is common to possessors of Christian consciousness.

Schleiermacher says that a dogmatic delineation necessarily portrays two characteristics: viz., assertory and divinatory: "In the former is manifested the author's confidence in his own theory; in the latter, the clearness with which he apprehends the existing state of things upon the whole."⁸² Again, he says: "A dogmatic treatment of the System of Doctrine, apart from personal conviction is not possible, on the other hand, it is not necessary that all those elaborations of it which have reference to the same period of the same Church-Community should agree amongst themselves."⁸³ From these two passages quoted above, we

80. The Theology of Schleiermacher, p.144.

81. Schleiermacher has merely delivered religion from its identification as dogmatics and has affirmed its independence of all that tends to distort or obscure the very nature of religion. As has been pointed out, he speaks with an apologetic purpose which, in turn, truly reflects the ferment of his time. But now, at this more matured stage in his theological thought, he feels the need for dogmatics and affirms that dogmatics stands in relation, if only in a "derivative relation," to Christian experience (rather than the reverse). cf. Cross, op. cit., p.142.

82. Schleiermacher, Brief Outline of the Study of Theology, translated by William Farrer, to which are prefixed Reminiscences of Schleiermacher by Friedrich Lücke. (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, MDCCCL. p.165.

deduce that Schleiermacher actually presupposes a supernatural kind of knowledge which, in its very nature, not only could find its full expression in the individual as his personal conviction, but also could help to apprehend the present states of the existing orders of the "Whole." The reason is that Schleiermacher postulates a transcendental power which lies in the general union of all existing forces---since in the world-whole, all are seen as interrelated or interdependent. Therefore, a uniform elaboration of this phase of knowledge in dogmatic treatment is virtually unnecessary. He also states that the dogmatic treatment has to do merely with the doctrines current at the given time.⁸⁴ This means that doctrinal statements are valid only in their own particular age, but must leave room for further theological developments in other times. For what one age may consider as valid doctrines may not sufficiently meet the needs of another age, because Schleiermacher thinks that this phase of adjustment involves and is conditioned by a situation which is historico-empirical.⁸⁵ Finally, Schleiermacher continues, "all points of doctrine which are developed by the dominant principle of the period, must agree amongst themselves."⁸⁶ This means it must be scientifically true, i.e. logically self-consistent expression.⁸⁷ This process of harmonizing the religious spirit and the modern scientific spirit of human nature validates dogma for the Christian communion. "As to its content," as Cross puts it, dogma, "is not made up of a series or system of propositions unfolded from some objective truth obtained by a speculative process, nor is it a combination of doctrines supernaturally revealed,"⁸⁸ for

83. Ibid., p.162.

84. Ibid., p.130.

85. cf. Barth, op. cit., p.141.

86. Brief Outline of the Study of Theology, p.164.

87. Cross, op. cit., p.149; Schleiermacher here is conscious of the historical character of the principle, and is not demanding a uniform elaboration of doctrines (as we have discussed above).

88. Ibid., p.142.

except insofar as the individual originally belongs to a part of the great whole; his self-consciousness is essentially or teleologically related to the larger individuality of the humanity (das Gesamtleben des Menschen). As to this point of view, Schleiermacher does involve or incorporate some supernatural concept about the origin of the content of dogma, as the religious consciousness is being traced this one-step further (The doctrine of the Great Whole, and the way in which individuals are related to humanity as a whole, will be discussed in the next chapter).

What of Schleiermacher's attitude to Scripture in relation to his doctrinal system? This does not seem to vary much from what he has said in his Speeches, and his purpose and attitude seem ever the same. Sacred writing, however, is by then "a glorious production" to him, and "a peaking monument from the heroic time of religion, but, through servile reverence, it would become merely a mausoleum, a monument that a great spirit once was there, but is now no more." Schleiermacher has a fresh outlook in his attitude to sacred writing. He regards this writing as originally aimed at communicating religious experience and ideas. So far as the exposition of its content is concerned, one has to take notice of its subjection to historical limitations, and so, Schleiermacher holds the same view in regarding religious feeling to be the primary and holy records the derivative and secondary, not vice versa. As he says: "Not every person has religion who believes in a sacred writing, but only the man who has a lively and immediate understanding of it, and who, therefore, so far as he himself is concerned, could most easily do without it."⁸⁹ Schleiermacher might well have thought that Scripture is not necessary for one's religion; and perhaps one's own scripture, if one could produce it, would be better than

89. Speeches, p.91.

the traditional writings. No doubt at a later viewpoint this philosophical approach to religion in relation to the sacred Scriptures is modified into a theological approach to the Christian faith. All this assumes that "we must, in the first place, rather have regard to the spirit than cling to the letter, and, in the second place, we must apply the exegetical art to the letter itself, in order to make a right use of it."⁹⁰

Schleiermacher has already pointed out the need for guarding ourselves with respect to language and expression,⁹¹ so as to discern form from nature and expose its true nature rather than assume that the outward form and the true nature are the same.⁹² It is necessary to differentiate between what is original (the natural) and what is artificial (the affected). This he says because the sacred writings include metaphysical and moral conceptions which are treated "in the creative, poetic impulse," and though it necessarily works "in a poor and thankless speech, an endeavour to break through from a lower region to a higher," one can easily see that any communication of this sort could be nothing other than poetical or rhetorical."⁹³

Finally Schleiermacher's appeal to Scripture must be to the New Testament only not the Bible in general. He insists that:-

Everyone must admit that if a doctrine had neither direct or indirect attestation in the New Testament, but only in the Old, no one could have much confidence in regarding it as a genuinely Christian doctrine; whereas if a doctrine is attested by the New Testament, no one will object to it, because there is nothing about it in the Old. Hence the Old Testament appears simply a superfluous authority for dogmatics.⁹⁴

90. Christian Faith, p.115.

91. Friess, "Language has exact symbols in fine abundance for everything thought and felt in the world's sense; it is the clearest mirror of the times, a work of art revealing the current spirit. But for our purposes language is still crude and undeveloped, a poor instrument of communion." op. cit., p.64.

92. Speeches, p.33.

93. Ibid., p.34.

94. Christian Faith, p.115.

His attitude toward the relation of Christianity to Judaism is that "Judaism is long since dead." He said: "My reason is not that it was the forerunner of Christianity. I hate that kind of historical reference. Each religion has in itself its own eternal necessity, and its beginning is original. But the beautiful childlike character of Judaism charms me."⁹⁵ His knowledge of the Old Testament is obviously inadequate, for Schleiermacher makes the cardinal mistake of relativizing the Old Testament concept of revelation via a scientific approach to the style and form of the Old Testament. The result? He finds a beautiful childlike character that "charms" him. What does he know about the relation of the Old Testament to the New Testament?⁹⁶ Is the Old Testament an introduction to the New Testament, or a preparation for it? --- or is the New Testament the fulfillment of the Old Testament? Schleiermacher's attitude is too arbitrary. Of course, according to his viewpoint, the New Testament and the Old Testament portray --- to all intents and purposes --- two different religions, and Old Testament religion is just one religion among many which all have some value and origin in the religious consciousness.⁹⁷ The present writer thinks he could just barely escape reproof for being contradictory to his method of dogmatic treatment in this aspect (as he put it, to discern the form from the nature). However, the problem has been discussed above, he has found his solution in the area of the religious consciousness, thus arbitrarily reconciling his scientifically self-assumed judgment with his defective self-asserted theory.

Schleiermacher's basic conception of the modification of Christian expression assumes precisely that Christianity is a living, ever self-renewing religious communion; that it is a spiritual phenomenon in history and an empirical fact, the

95. Speeches, pp.238f.

existence and nature of which cannot be deduced from the abstract conception of Christianity. Similarly, "the historical facts cannot be made to correspond with dialectical process."⁹⁸

96. According to Schleiermacher, the Old Testament is to be valued as "the most general auxiliary to the understanding of the New." Brief Outline of the Study of Theology, p.144.

97. Speeches, p.238.

98. Cross, op. cit., p.147.

CHAPTER II

THE GREAT WHOLE

Schleiermacher emphasizes the contemplation of the Universe and the receptivity of its action upon us in the religious consciousness through which is immediately awakened a sense of uniting with the great Whole (das Ganze). Oman points out that it was Kant, once again, who propounded this organic law which "at once became the predominating scientific idea" for the century; for Kant seeks to establish "a law whereby it appears that the whole is in all the parts."¹ Schleiermacher, in principle, agrees with him, as may be seen in his letter to E. von Willich in which he says: "Every detail is but a part of a whole, and that we must first have mastered the several parts in order to understand the whole; it is, therefore nothing more than a patient waiting for a perfect comprehension, and a sincere dislike of all one-sided conclusions."² Schleiermacher views this conception of a universally interrelated Whole as originally arising from the religious consciousness; and he meanwhile maintains that

No man is in a position to draw by his representation and speech from all who come before him the hidden gems of religion to light, for the sphere of religion is far too comprehensive. Remember the different ways by which men pass from consciousness of the individual and particular to the Whole and the Infinite: remember that, by this very mode of transition, a man's religion assumes its own distinct character. Think of the various influences whereby the Universe affects man, of the thousand single perceptions and of the thousand ways of combining them and showing one in the light of the other. Reflect, that if religion is actually to stir a man's own feeling.³

1. The Problem of Faith & Freedom, p.199.

2. Rowan, op. cit., I. p.269.

3. Speeches, pp.172f.

When we clarify ourselves, the sense of the Whole will be found "within our own minds and from thence transferred to corporeal nature."⁴ Schleiermacher's basic conception here involves not only the feeling which serves to connect man with the world without, but also the physical organization of the human being, in which the feeling is to be caused⁵ and which is originally a part of the Whole.⁶ Schleiermacher is bold enough to venture this concept of materially tracing a connection from feeling to human corpus, and from the abstraction of the interrelated Whole to the world without, thus working out his theory of the Great Whole from both the material and abstract sides. Schleiermacher, with this theory of reconciling things into a Whole, in a way which is valid on two sides, eventually incorporates the object into the subject, or vice versa; the antithesis of I and It is synthesized, since essentially they are not only co-related and seen as belonging to each other but also are seen as identical. This is how Schleiermacher victoriously secures religion's independence from philosophy and ethics. The latter two depend on a working antithesis of subject and object; whereas, for Schleiermacher, the effect of religion is essentially but a process of reconciling (or approximating) these areas, starting from that feeling which is caused by the operation of the Universe and transmitted to the corporate Whole. To support this theory of reconciliation or approximation, Munro remarks, Schleiermacher even spiritualizes the material world: "Reason is originally present in things not less than in us, in the material not less than in the spiritual. 'There is a process of ethic'

4. Speeches, pp.71, 138.

5. Schleiermacher says: "It is your body, you pervade, as your own, its muscles and members and your thinking and forecasting set its inmost nerves in motion." Ibid., p.43;cf. Christian Faith, pp.238f.

6. Munro, op. cit., p.154.

(Versittlichung) in the whole earthly nature, in time and space, which is never given as the work of human reason."⁷ Thus Schleiermacher involves a third element of the religious understanding of the world here to introduce a mysterious so-called "process of ethic" which extends over and beyond our reasoning. According to him, reason has its limits, but the excitation of emotion (Erregung) is flexible.⁸ When one's feeling is excited or sense awakened, one feels immediately united or belonging to the greater One, or to humanity (i.e., one in the One). When this theory is further developed, humanity as it exists in nature as a whole, is called world; and this world, while finite, is in Infinity.⁹ Cross sums up at this point: "The highest development of the self-consciousness involves a consciousness of our being a part of the articulated world-whole, and this again is a condition of the highest development of the God-consciousness."¹⁰

1. God and feeling.

To discuss the term "God" one must apply Schleiermacher's key to religion, i.e., feeling. "A feeling of freedom in relation to the world" won for Schleiermacher, the independence of religion from an ambiguous admixture with the knowledge and activity of mankind. And yet, to explain Schleiermacher's concept of God, this feeling is also both a feeling of freedom in relation to the world and a feeling of absolute dependence in relation to the term "God". According to Schleiermacher, religion

7. Ibid., pp.292f.

8. Speeches, p.42.

9. Oman says: "Schleiermacher's speculation was to find reality for the individual as a whole within a whole." Ibid., p.xxix.

10. The Theology of Schleiermacher, p.158.

is both individual experience and mystical concept. It is only through subjective experience that we can contemplate this mystical or transcendental idea of "God". We possess no real objective knowledge of God; knowledge essentially belongs to man so he might understand or determine himself; but so far as God is concerned, man's knowledge goes out of the picture.¹¹ But Schleiermacher says:

If, however, word and idea are always originally one, and the term 'God' therefore presupposes an idea, then we shall simply say that this idea, which is nothing more than the expression of the feeling of absolute dependence, is the most direct reflection upon it and the most original idea with which we are here concerned, and is quite independent of that original knowledge (properly so called), and conditioned only by our feeling of absolute dependence.¹²

This feeling of absolute dependence or as Otto suggested "creature feeling"¹³ can be explained as "an awareness of the existence of God, as the absolute undivided unity."¹⁴ "The realization of oneself as absolutely dependent is the only way in which God and the ego can co-exist in self-consciousness."¹⁵ But this awareness of the existence of God --- that is to say, this God-consciousness --- must be connected with other determinations of the self-consciousness so as to make them subordinate to this one;¹⁶ for even these determinations of the self-consciousness are capable of exciting the religious consciousness through the contemplation of the Universe. Otherwise, the God-consciousness would be but an empty proposition.

Schleiermacher's approach to the concept of God is fundamentally Christian. He does not arrive at this on the basis of

11. Christian Faith, p.748.

12. Ibid., p.17. cf. p.16.

13. Otto, op. cit., pp.20f.

14. Christian Faith, p.132.

15. Ibid., p.133.

16. Ibid., pp.17, 47.

his philosophy of religion as he did in the Speeches, where one finds these terms in an undeveloped state of his concept of God: Eternal, Universe, Infinity, Indeterminate, etc. In the Speeches Schleiermacher had emphasized that piety may even exist without any idea of God whatsoever; but in the Christian Faith, apparently moving a step further, he lays down the idea that God means "the Whence of our receptive and active existence."¹⁷ God, to him, is an absolute universal causality; and our feeling of absolute dependence is a real and direct reflection of the dominant and binding principle behind all phenomena and the true Source of our life in our self-consciousness. Man, in order to have true freedom in all other worldly relations, must realize himself as being absolutely dependent on God and must passively surrender to this Being of beings, this Reality of realities. Schleiermacher adds that:

The feeling of absolute dependence becomes a clear self-consciousness only as this idea comes simultaneously into being. In this sense it can indeed be said that God is given to us in feeling in an original way; and if we speak of an original revelation of God to man or in man, the meaning will always be just this, that, along with the absolute dependence which characterizes not only man but all temporal existence, there is given to man also the immediate self-consciousness of it, which becomes a consciousness of God.¹⁸

17. Ibid., p.16; cf. Mackintosh, op. cit., p.64.

18. Christian Faith, pp.17f; cf. Munro, "It is immediate in the sense that consciousness of God is not formed in us, like the concept or the judgment, through the intervention of an object, or the medium of reflection. In feeling, the contrasts upon which thought rests are suppressed. What we feel is not something external or finite, not the totality of being or the highest power: what we feel is our own individual self-consciousness as essentially related to God. Feeling is the form of subjective knowledge corresponding to the Absolute. It is not wrought in us: it is the immediate relation of the soul to the transcendental Unity appearing and revealing itself in finite things, and it simply comes to existence in the individual consciousness." op. cit., pp.196f.

Schleiermacher would seem to say that this kind of divine existence in the individual or in other temporal beings must in turn presuppose that the existence of God pervades throughout the world;¹⁹ for since God is an absolute undivided Unity, any attempt to present a pure and true conception of God tends to imply division in Him. Schleiermacher is very cautious not to give rise to any objective consciousness of God's existence, for to do so would not be true to his interpretation of the nature of religion.²⁰

Schleiermacher hates to accept any concept of God which is derived solely from either intellectual speculation or sensuous satisfaction, because it would not be true either to human experience or to the nature of human knowledge. Schleiermacher completely refuses to develop the concept of God along these lines: there would be absolutely no place for such a concept of God in his dogmatic system.²¹ At this point Selbie concludes that, in Schleiermacher's system, the doctrine of God is inadequate:

In his strong reaction against Deism he tended to adopt pantheistic forms of expression and to emphasize the divine immanence at the expense of His transcendence. He was not concerned to prove the objective reality of the Being of God, but was deeply interested in asking what God was to the individual.²²

Thus, according to Schleiermacher: God is originally unknown to man, yet in the meantime, He is not far away from us. Schleiermacher's concept of God is unknown only apart from the religious

19. Mackintosh, op. cit., p.64.

20. According to Schleiermacher, religion is a matter of "everyone's own": if any proof of God is possible, and if any objective knowledge of God is to be derived, religion eventually becomes a derived datum totally foreign to that religious consciousness which is an original endowment to the nature of man.

21. Christian Faith, pp.136f.

22. Schleiermacher, p.254.

realm, viz., in the feeling of absolute dependence and man's sensation of being immediately united with Him.²³ Schleiermacher preached: "How can we have living trust in God if He is not near and present in our soul; i.e., if we do not in the depth of our hearts see His divine nature as that of the strong and beneficent God? But God is love, and therefore we can only be near Him in the living strength of love."²⁴ This does not imply to prove God in the living strength of love, for any attempts to prove God are not only unnecessary but frankly impossible. And Schleiermacher in fact affirms:

We cannot form any real conception of the highest Being; but that philosophy (ideomorphism) properly consists in the perception that this inexpressible reality of the highest Being underlies all our thinking and all our feeling; and the development of this knowledge is, according to my conviction, what Plato understood by dialectics. But further than this, I believe, we cannot get.²⁵

And, in another passage from the Christian Faith, Schleiermacher says that a God that "could be proved, must not itself be God."²⁶ Because God is transcendent, we cannot adequately or scientifically describe Him, since every description is a limitation which is irreconcilable with His essence.²⁷ Therefore, "His nature is such that in no sense could we react upon Him. Were such reaction possible, the sense of utter and unreserved dependence would promptly vanish, and our attitude could no longer be described as specifically religious in character."²⁸

23. Christoph Senft, Wahrhaftigkeit und Wahrheit, (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1956). "Schleiermacher, philosophisch ein Erbe des 18. Jahrhunderts und ein Romantiker, hat kein Verständnis für ein solches Gegenüber von Gott und Mensch; es ist ihm selbstverständlich, dass das Göttliche im Menschen selbst liegt." p.7.

24. Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher, (edited by W. Robertson Nicoll, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1890), pp.400f.

25. Rowan, op. cit., II. p.283.

26. Christian Faith, p.136.

27. Lichtenberger, op. cit., p.142.

28. Mackintosh, op. cit., p.64.

Schleiermacher hesitated to adopt or assert the idea of a personal God.²⁹ In his letter to Jacobi he says: "The foundation of your philosophy was the idea of a personal God, which I denied."³⁰ Thus, while Schleiermacher's God is as true and near to his heart as he is to himself, he does not allow any concept of the objective reality of God to be formed. Actually, this is what he really means by absolute dependence.³¹ Absolute dependence to the Indeterminate! That is why Hegel sarcastically mocked his typical phrase, "feeling of absolute dependence," saying that Schleiermacher's dog would even be more faithful and pious than its master.³² It is because this speculative champion can only see that this is a kind of half-way knowledge that he must reject its indeterminate character. Pfeleiderer points out:

How Schleiermacher came to give such a meagre account of religious feeling, emphasizing what may be called the physical side of dependence on an infinite cause, to the neglect of the moral side, represented in the feeling of alliance with a voluntary power related spiritually to ourselves. We can hardly be wrong in tracing the origin of this defect to the influence of the Philosophy of Spinoza, whose *cognitio Dei intuitiva* is nothing else than the reference of all finite phenomena to the necessary causality of God, --- that is, the feeling of our dependence upon it. This supposition is confirmed by Schleiermacher's doctrine of God, which is connected with his imperfect theory of the nature of religion.³³

29. In the Speeches, Schleiermacher sees that piety may exist without any idea of God whatsoever even though, in a more mature viewpoint, a religion without a personal God might be better than one with a personal God.

30. Rowan, op. cit., II. p.283.

31. Christian Faith, p.14.

32. Eric S. Waterhouse, Modern Theories of Religion, (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1910), p.57.

33. Development of Theology, p.106.

As to Schleiermacher's view of the relation of God to the world,³⁴ the religious feeling is the result of God's operation in us by means of the operation of the world.³⁵ As Wendland puts it: "There is no isolated intuition of Godhead, but we see it only at, in or with the whole system of intuition. Our knowledge of God is, therefore, only completed in the world-view."³⁶ God and world are not identical, but correlative, like "right" and "left".³⁷ But God underlies all our being, thinking, and feeling; He is the presupposition of all valid knowledge --- and yet, "God is never apprehended as it were nakedly, but always in conjunction with, or mediated by, some finite element of the world."³⁸

2. Universe and man.

We will deal with the heading of Universe and man more from the material side than we did in our approach to the heading God and feeling which we have discussed above. As Mackintosh points out:

It is Schleiermacher's contention that the fundamental Unity may be designated either God or world. These two ideas are given only in and with each other. Think the world without God, and it has no bond of union; think God without the world, and the object of our thought is devoid of content. Yet the one is in no sense identical with the other. The world is the supreme Unity including all antitheses; God is the supreme Unity excluding all antitheses.³⁹

34. More about the world will be treated in the following section. Here we are concerned only with God in relation to the world.

35. In order to apprehend the operation of God, the world-impression is our necessary source for the content of the object of our thought.

36. "Es gibt keine isolierte Anschauung der Gottheit, sondern wir schauen sie nur an, in und mit dem gesamten System der Anschauung." 'Unser Wissen um Gott ist also erst vollendet mit der Weltanschauung.'" (quoted by him) op. cit., p.198.

37. Mackintosh, op. cit., p.30.

38. Ibid., pp.40f.

39. Ibid., pp.39f.

According to Schleiermacher, man possesses a possible conception of God in the religious consciousness, but only via the contemplation of the Universe. Suppose that this cause as the result of God's operation upon us through the operation of the world.⁴⁰ In that case the world is a medium of the divine, both as the sphere of divine activity and in the self-consciousness of human existence. If Schleiermacher had only discussed the God-consciousness and human feelings without relating or referring them to the world and to man, we should have a quite empty and abstract discussion which, perhaps, only spiritual beings could conduct convincingly.

In the feeling of absolute dependence, the God-consciousness and world-consciousness should be distinguished from each other, though without obscuring their close relationship and co-existence.⁴¹ The world supplies us with the expression of the divine causality and with a reflection of the content of the God-consciousness. Cross writes that the various modifications of religious feeling arise "from our relation to the universally interrelated totality of Nature in which we are." He continues: "The range of our experience (or of the consciousness of our relations) is limited to this world, and hence the feeling of absolute dependence is experienced only within the world-whole (world-order) and through it. That is to say, for us the absolute divine causality finds its full expression in the totality of the forces of Nature."⁴² Thus ensues quite a process of analysing Schleiermacher's theory of the development of religion! Schleiermacher sees everyone as possessing feeling, which is the elementary capacity for religion. When once awakened or excited,⁴³

40. Speeches, p.45.

41. Christian Faith, pp.118, 233.

42. The Theology of Schleiermacher, pp.165f.

43. "Since the religious self-consciousness can only fill a moment when combined with an excitation of the sensuous self-consciousness, and every such excitation is an impression of the world." Christian Faith, p.233.

this feeling stretches out to the plurality of beings of finite existence (i.e., the world). "We take up the world into our self-consciousness and expand the latter into a general consciousness of finitude, we are conscious of ourselves as absolutely dependent." Meanwhile, Schleiermacher also points out that "we are constituent parts of the world."⁴⁴ Does this mean that our absolute dependence stems from the nature of the world, as we see it, as a composition of constituent parts, each of which is absolutely dependent upon the other? Does this situation reflect our human situation? Is the concept of Unity of the world simply identical with God? Otherwise, where does Schleiermacher make place for the concept of the Unity of the world?⁴⁵ Or viewed from another aspect, the Unity of the world may depend on the absolute supreme force of unification, i.e., God. If God is originally presented in the religious self-consciousness of man, then either we have the human mind actually perceiving this world of infinite multiplicity as a unity, or we see God as an unknown datum⁴⁶ binding this world of infinite multiplicity together as a Unity. The concept of God as the Supreme Unity behind all and binding all is more maturely presented in the Christian Faith than in the Speeches, in which it is said that the pantheistic trend is undeniable.⁴⁷ In the strict sense of the word Schleiermacher actually was not, then or later a pantheist, although a part of his work probably is undergirded

44. Ibid., p.35.

45. Here Oman has pointed out that "the Universe, in accordance with the new philosophy, was conceived as infinitely active. In this part of Schleiermacher's doctrine there are distinct traces of Schelling. This activity divides itself, but division is not separation, but parallelism and interaction. This division that is not separation, is found throughout the Universe." Speeches, p.xxix.

46. That is, either God is known in the feeling of absolute dependence as God-consciousness, or He is unknown in the sense of personality.

47. Cross, op. cit., p.108.

with a Spinozist structure.⁴⁸ Mackintosh rightly apprehends Schleiermacher at this point, saying that "he makes it clear that for him the feeling of absolute dependence points beyond the sum-total of finite beings. 'This (Whence),...concerning the Source of all, 'is not the world.'"⁴⁹

Another conspicuous aspect concerning the world must be discussed. "The Universe is in unbroken activity, and reveals itself to us at every moment. Every form, every creature, every occurrence is an action of the Universe upon us, and religion is just the acceptance of each separate thing as a part of the Whole, of each limited thing as an exhibition of the Infinite."⁵⁰ Schleiermacher continues along these lines:

The more everyone approaches the Universe and the more they communicate to one another, the more perfectly they all become one. No one has a consciousness for himself, each has also that of his neighbour. They are no longer men, but mankind also. Going out of themselves and triumphing over themselves, they are on the way to true immortality and eternity.⁵¹

Thus through a religious process, humanity is destined to melt down into one fellowship.⁵² Schleiermacher means this to be

48. Pfleiderer writes: "The relation of God to the world (which forms the basis of his entire theology), according to which both God and world are conceived as equal magnitudes, only that the former is the absolute and undivided unity, which the latter is the unity from the relation of the natura naturans to the natura naturata of Spinoza." op. cit., p.110. As for pantheism, he does not regard this as "a special form of religion, but as a speculative theory, quite reconcilable with true religious feeling, as long as we do not understand by it a masked materialism." Ibid., p.53.

49. Types of Modern Theology, p.79.

50. Speeches, pp.278f.

51. Ibid., p.180.

52. Schleiermacher's basic Christian belief relates to his doctrine of the original perfection of the world, in the sense that the process of this perfection is identical with the activity of the expansion of Christianity in the world. He optimistically believes that ultimately this specific religious community will pervade all peoples. As Cross puts it: "original

related to the original perfection of the world, as the ultimate goal to be reached. He postulates that the original perfection, but of a developed one, does not refer to "any definite condition of the world or of men nor of the God-consciousness in men." Rather,

such perfection is affirmed in the above sense, i.e. it is laid down that all finite being, so far as it co-determines our self-consciousness, is traceable back to the eternal omnipotent causality, and all the impressions of the world we receive, as well as the particular way (consequent on human nature) in which the predisposition towards God-consciousness becomes realized, include the possibility that the God-consciousness should combine with each impression of the world in the unity of a moment.⁵³

Here Schleiermacher draws attention to what he calls the "eternal omnipotent causality". It is the working force for approximating the world-impression to the God-consciousness in the religious self-consciousness. One might say that Schleiermacher's "eternal omnipotent causality" is the projector throwing pictures on the screen, i.e., his concept of the world. The screen can show off only what is already in the projector.⁵⁴ It continuously develops a running situation, one picture after another, rather than freely developing something ad lib.⁵⁵ "The question," Schleiermacher avers, "is rather of self-identical perfection prior to all temporal development and based on the inner relations of relevant finite existence."⁵⁶ That is to

perfection pertains to human nature, in that man possesses the original capacity of connecting all his experiences with God, that he is capable of propagating that same religious attitude to all men, and that all men are consequently capable of receiving it." op. cit., p.174. We shall discuss this in greater detail when treating Schleiermacher's doctrine of the Church.

53. Christian Faith, p.234.

54. cf. Brunner, Man in Revolt, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1939), p.438.

55. Just as in the relation of the television set to the station, the TV set is absolutely dependent upon what the station televises.

56. Christian Faith, p.234.

say, we are dealing with "those relationships which uniformly underlie the whole temporal development and throughout it remain the same."⁵⁷ Thus, the continuous unfolding of the world has a definite purpose of developing, or of attaining to, something. Revelation means to discover this purpose, or to understand this unfolding of the world.⁵⁸ Schleiermacher clarifies this:

In belief in the eternal omnipotence it is implied that the world is the complete revelation of it, so in belief in the original perfection of the world it is implied that through the feeling of absolute dependence the divine omnipotence in all its livingness reveals itself everywhere in the world, as eternally omnipresent and omniscient, without any distinction of more or less, without even a contrast in respect of dependence between one part and another.⁵⁹

Here it must be pointed out that the expression of the content of revelation is but an expression of human nature.⁶⁰ Why? Because the world is the complete revelation of the eternal omnipotence, and "man himself, with his constitution, is an integral part of the world."⁶¹ The revelation which is understood as the original communication of the world to man must therefore, be human expression. That is what Schleiermacher means by saying that the original perfection of the world includes the original perfection of man.⁶² "The relations between man and the world are twofold---each acts upon, and is acted upon by, the other,"⁶³ and the influence of their activity is reciprocal. In Schleiermacher's own words: "This explanation would

57. Ibid., p.235.

58. According to Schleiermacher, religion implies an apprehension of the communication of the Universe to man. As Otto says: "The presentiment goes out to meet the 'revelation' to which it belongs." op. cit., p.164.

59. Christian Faith p.234.

60. Because the finite beings could be utilized as instrument or means of expression. cf. Christian Faith, p.238.

61. Ibid., p.236.

62. Loc. cit.

63. Cross, op. cit., p.171.

not be hard to give, for, assuming an organic construction of the whole, all is just as much for each as each for all."⁶⁴ He actually means that the religious self-consciousness has two states, passive and active, both of which are necessary in the development of the God-consciousness. Its process is this:

Passive states, however, can only arise through operative influences, and hence the original perfection of the world in relation to men consists primarily in this, that in it is temporally grounded the excitation of passive states which are to pass into active states (these we name incentives), or, in other words, that they sufficiently determine the receptivity of man to the awakening and shaping of his self-activity.⁶⁵

Man is actually in the world; his relation to the world is the same as his feeling of absolute dependence to his body, his physical organism, all of his elements being articulated into this great whole and all exercising influence upon the others. Schleiermacher goes even further in this respect, saying that not only could finite beings or things of the world serve merely the revelation of the Eternal, but that originally also "there is a divine element in things."⁶⁶ He preached that the entire human being and all of nature have been endowed with "manifold but variously diversified gifts" by the Spirit, manifesting themselves "in different ways according to differences of time and situation."⁶⁷ They are all interdependent: they co-exist in a closed organic connection.⁶⁸ It may be imagined that Schleiermacher actually infers the activity of the great Whole from the activity of the human physical organism, i.e., the body.

64. Christian Faith, p.237.

65. Ibid., p.238.

66. As Mackintosh puts it, according to Schleiermacher: "Have you opened your mind to its reality and answered its appeal? A sublime and eternal meaning pervades the world, which no human conceptions can ever compass or exhaust: has your soul bowed before it in reverence?" op. cit., p.53.

67. Nicoll, Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher, pp.219f.

68. Ibid., p.439.

The body is composed of many different organs, all of which work harmoniously together, each of which supports and is supported by the others, yet each of which immediately remains relatively free and yet also relatively dependent.⁶⁹ In this respect the world, too, is a harmonious cosmos: "The world is a harmonious cosmos or is meant to become this more and more. The ethical [process] has already begun to penetrate nature and progresses more and more in this."⁷⁰ As Schleiermacher himself wrote:

For we have a feeling of freedom (though, indeed, a limited one) in relation to the world, since we are complementary parts of it, and also since we are continually exercising an influence on its individual parts; and, moreover, there is the possibility of our exercising influence on all its parts; and while this does permit a limited feeling of dependence, it excludes the absolute feeling.⁷¹

In forming his concept of the Unity of the Universe (the world-whole), he thereby spiritualizes Nature at the expense of materializing the value of man.⁷² Man, together with finite existence, has the same standing in the Universe which is the eternal behind which the Eternal stand.⁷³ "Every finite thing, however," Schleiermacher says, "is a sign of the Infinite, and so these various expressions declare the immediate relation of a phenomenon to the Infinite and the Whole."⁷⁴ Probably the so-called "Infinite" (Unendliche) and "the Whole" (Ganze), as in the passage just quoted, may signify an "eternal" which does

69. The present writer feels that Schleiermacher actually illustrates the unity of the activity of a human body to form his concept of the unity of the activity of the world.

70. Wendland, "Die Welt ist ein harmonischer Kosmos oder soll es immer mehr werden. Das Sittliche hat bereits begonnen, die Natur zu durchdringen und schreitet immer weiter hierin fort." *op. cit.*, p.110.

71. Christian Faith, pp.16f.

72. As Munro points out in his *Aesthetik*, Schleiermacher has a remarkable discussion on man's place in Nature (*Aesthetik*, pp.101-106). "In your bodily organization we have a sense that is open to the manifoldness of the world and its appearances." *Schleiermacher*, p.294.

not correspond to the "Eternal". In such a case the Eternal would only stand behind the eternal. Some more explanations are given by Munro when, at the end of his book, he discusses the notion of the highest force in the world of experience, a force which is the ground of all appearances but which does not transcend the sphere of that which is contrasted, since

'every force is measured by the totality of its appearance, and is, therefore, necessarily of a definite or determined extent.' Besides, 'the highest force only so conditions all that it becomes itself conditioned by all.' The highest force taken along with its inseparable appearance, or the system of the reciprocal action of things upon each other, can give us only 'the idea of the world---the system of forces, the abiding forms of beings, as identical with the system of cause of effect.' This, it is true, is the limit of our knowledge---the terminus ad quem, but it is not the terminus a quo, the 'Whence' of our knowledge. The real Absolute can never be identical with the totality of knowing and being, since it is the transcendent ground of all knowing and being, the true Unconditioned conditioning all things.⁷⁵

No doubt, Schleiermacher meant that in nature all is completely interdependent via a higher unifying force. All this is significant⁷⁶ in the sense that more or less, we see constituent

73. Mackintosh, op. cit., p.53.

74. Speeches, p.88.

75. Schleiermacher, p.292: cf. "God and world are not to be identified, but 'neither can we think of one without the other'; they are correlatives. Both are transcendent; the world transcends all actual thought as a terminus ad quem toward which the process of discovery approaches; God transcends thought absolutely as a terminus a quo, in which thinking is grounded, but which it cannot approach." (Werke, III v.4,2 pp.154-172), quoted by Friess, op. cit., p.137.

76. Schleiermacher affirms that nothing, not even the smallest "should be excluded from the relation of absolute dependence" as a stimulating object of the religious consciousness. See Christian Faith, p.172.

parts manifesting themselves in the whole. Of course we know that in all these ideas Schleiermacher owes a great ideal to the contemporary thought of his age. At this point he clarifies himself so as not to be tagged ^{guilty of} with a pantheistic point of view. He said:

We ought to observe more carefully the difference between a universal and an individual cause. For in the totality of finite being only a particular and partial causality is given to each individual, since each is dependent not on one other but on all the others; the universal causality attaches only to that on which the totality of this partial causality is itself dependent.⁷⁷

Finally, with regard to the world and its origin and development, the term "historical whole" is introduced. Schleiermacher says: "Every historical whole is capable of a continued existence only by means of the same energies through which is originated."⁷⁸ His view is that one has no consciousness of a beginning of existence, but only of a continuous existence.⁷⁹ Schleiermacher warned that "all attempts to form a historical picture of the first beginnings of human existence are bound to fail, because, as we have no experience of an absolute beginning, we have no analogy by which we could make the absolute beginning of rational consciousness intelligible." But "if the narrative is regarded not as history but simply as an ancient attempt to make good the lack of an historical account of the beginnings of the human race, the particular points in it will have inner truth for us in so far as they agree with the conception which

77. Ibid., pp.174f.

78. Brief Outline of the Study of Theology, p.208.

79. In other word, not "the origin of the world but its co-existence with God and its relatedness to God." Christian Faith, pp.174, 748; cf. Baillie: According to Schleiermacher, "faith has no concern at all with the manner of creation, but only with the assurance that behind all creation there is, somehow, God." op. cit., p.34.

we have laid down."⁸⁰ Schleiermacher here rightly challenges the consciousness of modern scientific knowledge in a negative way. For in going back in thought, we have reached the end of it, farther than which we cannot go.⁸¹

One more aspect has to be discussed before concluding this chapter. It is this: the fact that every individual has his own significance within humanity. "I saw clearly," Schleiermacher says, "that each man is meant to represent humanity in his own way, combining its elements uniquely, so that it may reveal itself in every mode, and all that can issue from its womb be made actual in the fullness of unending space and time."⁸² He sets forth the claims of the importance of the individual:

Everyone knows that he is both a part and a work of the Universe, in him also its divine life and working being revealed. He, therefore, regards himself as an object worthy of the attention of others. With sacred reserve, yet with a ready openness that all may enter and behold, he lays bare everything of the relations of the Universe of which he is conscious and what of the elements of humanity takes individual shape in him. Why should they hide anything from one another? All that is human is holy, for all is divine.⁸³

As Lichtenberger explains it, Schleiermacher sees that "man carries in himself the consciousness of the eternal and the infinite; he does not receive it from without; it constitutes the foundation of his being."⁸⁴

Thus, Schleiermacher truly apprehends the human

80. Christian Faith, p.250.

81. As Oman puts it: "This is the source and the type of all experience. Perception therefore rests not on reasoned knowledge but on belief; it is a transaction with the Universe and therefore a religious act." Speeches, pp.xxixf.

82. Friess, op. cit., p.31.

83. Speeches, p.180.

84. History of German Theology in the 19th Century, p.67.

fellowship, the importance of the individual within humanity,⁸⁵ the reality of the Universe, and the religious life which seeks the full manifestations of the Universe as a marvelous, infinitely active Whole.⁸⁶

85. Friess, "Each human being has his own unique place within the sphere of humanity, and it is only by his approaching this that he can exercise his influence in the spiritual community." op. cit., p.xliii.

86. As R. Otto understands it, "The vast, living totality and reality of things as it is in nature and history." op. cit., p.150.



CHAPTER III

THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

Schleiermacher has an original and remarkable interpretation of sin. His viewpoint is quite independent of both the traditional description of it and the Scriptural narrative of it. He works out the doctrine of sin in accordance with his policy of organizing his theological thought as one organic whole.

He calls one's attention to a re-examination of the whole concept of sin, which is worth discussing or emphasizing only as it is related to other issues of theological notions.¹ He refuses to concretize the concept of sin as a reality of sin-in-itself,² or to imagine it to be a really existent external enemy of mankind or as an antagonist to God's will. If it were the former, the concept of a great harmonious whole, or the unity of the world-whole would be invalidated, or else would be contradictory to itself; if it were the latter, the concept of the absolute dependence of the world-whole to the Eternal would be over spiritualized or "evaporated". Another possibility is involved: that there would be a third kind of existence introduced into his system of thought; but Schleiermacher himself would

1. "In the sinful nature, the bad [Böse] exists only cor-relatively with the good, and no moment is occupied exclusively by sin; for sin actually presupposes the God-consciousness, so that the sinful nature always retains the presence of God as something imparted, though only in the most limited degree." "The limitation of the God-consciousness, as well as its impartation, may be grounded in one and the same divine will." Christian Faith, p.332.

2. "We must rather insist upon the fact that sin in general exists only in so far as there is a consciousness of it; and this again is always conditioned by a good which must have preceded it and must have been just a result of that original perfection." Ibid., p.277.

never give way to such confusion.³ Thus, so far as the positive reality of sin is concerned, there is no place for it in his system of thought. Schleiermacher is very sure that he cannot assign any unique or certain characteristics to the fragmental notions of sin, by way ⁱⁿ of delineating its original nature. He only recognizes the doctrine of sin as having negative value in the whole drama of salvation; it can only be utilized at every stage of the development of the religious consciousness.⁴ It serves to reflect the good. In Schleiermacher's optimistic thought which believes that Christianity shall expand to embrace all humanity, we find that sin actually serves to stimulate the realization of the need for redemption.⁵ As Christianity expands, sin shrinks and ultimately disappears.⁶

Schleiermacher says: "In Christianity these two, sin and grace, are valid ideas only on the basis of redemption and on the assumption that it has been appropriated."⁷ He means that both ideas, sin and grace, exist side by side; and he assumes that "everywhere human evil exists only as attached to good, and sin only as attached to grace."⁸ According to him, sin is necessary⁹ for working out the process of redemption; for he preaches:

3. Ibid., pp.169f.

4. Regarding "sin as a state of man, he insists that it must always be considered from the standpoint of the personal consciousness. He identifies sin and the consciousness of sin. It exists in all stages of human development and expresses itself as a strife between lower and higher impulses, between the flesh and spirit"; "a consciousness of struggle between different powers of the nature, and this consciousness constitutes sin." Selbie, op. cit., pp.146f.

5. "Sin does not belong to the essence of humanity, but is a contradiction of man's native God-consciousness." Ibid., p.118.

6. It is God's will that "sin should gradually be banished through grace, but this is to say that it is God's will that sin should exist (for us, not for Him), else the redemption could not occur." Cross, op. cit., p.189.

7. Christian Faith, p.264.

8. Ibid., p.327.

Every great historical event is a judgment on some evil that has gained the mastery, and it thus becomes in one aspect or another the germ of a new life; and only where we find and recognize a great phenomenon. And the same is true as to individuals; sin must have somewhere gained the upper hand, the flesh must have been active and ruling, that grace may have the mastery when the spirit attains to life; every one must first have tasted the life of corruption, and then, by the second act of divine omnipotence and love, he is born of the Spirit and becomes spirit.¹⁰

Wendland wrote: "Every evil was to him a transitional-point for aiming at perfection in God. This transition was necessary, was willed by God."¹¹ Thus, evil is not only closely related to but also conditioned by good. Schleiermacher persistently emphasized the negative significance of the fact that sin exists only in the world of religious experience. Selbie reminds us that to understand Schleiermacher's doctrine of sin, the idea of "sin itself is an antithesis of the religious self-consciousness," and must therefore be kept in mind.¹² Selbie's reminder is not without its point when one looks back to Schleiermacher's earlier concept of sin, expressed in his Speeches: "Religion has no other opposite than just the absence of religious purpose." Here it seems that "cold" is nothing else than just the absence of "heat". As he says: "Every interruption of religion is irreligion. If the mind is for a moment without intuition and feeling of the Infinite, it at once becomes conscious of hostility

9. Schleiermacher writes: "I understand human nature to be a necessary stage of spiritual life, and viewed from this side no human being is insignificant who has in him something peculiar, which represents human nature from a new side." Rowan, op. cit., I. p.368.

10. Nicoll, Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher, p.90.

11. "Alles Böse war ihm ein Durchgangspunkt zu dem Ziele der Vollendung in Gott. Dieser Durchgang durch das Böse war notwendig, von Gott gewollt." Die Religiöse Entwicklung Schleiermachers, p.187.

12. Schleiermacher, p.143.

and remoteness. Christianity then demands as first and essential that piety as a constant state."¹³ Although Schleiermacher views Christianity as a continuous progressive advancement, yet the course of development is not strictly a smooth line. It is a struggle,¹⁴ a social one as well as an individual one. Besides the passage quoted above from his preaching, here it may also be seen why Mackintosh has added:

In every moment of consciousness, he argues, it is possible to distinguish between two elements or factors: a sense of freedom and a sense of constraint, of self-determination and of being determined by things around us. Our human life is an alternating and continuous succession of these two kinds of feeling; we are never wholly subject to our environment, but also we are never wholly masters of it. Yet a region or zone of experience does exist in which we have the sense of being dependent and nothing else. That zone is religion.¹⁵

To quote one more passage from his preaching:

Undeniably one of the strangest phenomena of the human soul is the conflict between two feelings, both lying deep in the noblest part of our nature, and yet constantly opposed to each other: our love to our fellows on the one side, and our pure sense of right and wrong, of good and evil, on the other.¹⁶

This is his own description of the state of the human soul. It is a strenuous state of transition, a process of constantly becoming better.¹⁷ Other than noticing a feeling of absolute dependence, we see in all this a helping force for keeping this

13. Speeches, p.245.

14. Friess, "We are here waging a great battle around the sacred standard of humanity, which we, men of the future, must maintain for the coming generations. It is a decisive battle, but also a certain victory, to be won, independent of chance or fortune, by spiritual strength and genuine art." op. cit., p.65.

15. Types of Modern Theology, p.63.

16. Nicoll, Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher, pp.286f.

17. Schleiermacher wrote: "If human beings have the power of conquering their lower instincts when they become conscious of them, why should they not also be able to conquer their higher ones and to supplant them by something higher still." Rowan, op. cit., I. p.325.

state of transition fluid. This is what he means: "So hat das Christenthum zuerst und wesentlich die Forderung gemacht, dass die Frömmigkeit ein beharrlicher Zustand sein soll im menschen."¹⁸ He goes on to emphasize that this is original and native to man, that only thus is man worthy of being distinguished from the animals. This possibility of spiritual contradiction is vouchsafed by God. At first, however, Schleiermacher may have seen all this as but an auxillary element, something attached to man's native religious consciousness. Notice how he preaches:

Every man, they say, is at the same time flesh and spirit; thus has God in a similar way endowed all; only in some, through that progress which they make, the spirit gains more and more command over the flesh, and those are the good; with others, on the contrary, the spirit is long kept under, is only rarely seen in its beauty and strength; and the greater part of their life is devoted to various manifestations of carnality, in violent secret or open conflict with the spirit, and those are the wicked; but the great majority of men are those whose lives pass away in continual vacillations, without a decisive preponderance on the one side or the other. But still the spirit is present and at work in all; for otherwise they could not be men, but would be beasts.¹⁹

It will be seen that Schleiermacher contradicts himself: he is illogical, at least, in delineating his concept of sin while at the same time emphasizing this spiritual contradiction of the human soul.²⁰ How could God endow man with the evil element embodied in the flesh, as the previous passage represents,

18. Reden Ueber die Religion an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern, Mit Einleitung herausgegeben von Dr. Schwarz, (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1868), p.227.

19. Nicoll, Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher, p.92.

20. It is said that Schleiermacher could never have written his sermons before he preached (Ibid., pp.26f.). This has been pointed out that his preaching is sometimes different from the thought of the elaborately architectural work of the Christian Faith or even that of the Speeches.

when the discussion up to now has alleged that sin or evil is but an attached element to grace or good? If sin or evil has any existence at all, it must be conditioned by or be dependent on grace or good.

Schleiermacher applies, however, an acute dialectical process in unfolding his concept of sin. All different possibilities are sought,²¹ but the conclusion is that the existence of evil owes to its relation to good. According to him, sin could also be an element native to man, particularly prominent in man's earliest development but present throughout the whole unfolding of the religious consciousness. As he writes: "Sin is anterior to grace being simply the expression of the human race's need for redemption and of its relation to Christ."²² One could not help thinking that Schleiermacher's concept might, from this viewpoint, be too mechanical,²³ particularly when one thinks of his theory of prophetic analysis: i.e., that the whole human situation works itself out automatically, sooner or later, perhaps rapidly in some lives and slowly in others. He has so

21. If it were considered as the act of man, "it would be in contradiction with the disposition to the God-consciousness which is present in man as a vital impulse." If it were an actual existence, as man in the state of sin exists within the natural order (or, as it were, "co-extensive" with the divine causality), then the unity of the world-whole is destroyed. If there are divine attributes related to sin, then the unity of the divine causality is torn. Finally, "if it develops in man in consequence of impressions received from the totality of finite existence," then the perfection of the world in relation to man has vanished. Christian Faith, p.269.

22. Ibid., p.266.

23. It is the divine immutable law that "each definite thing can only be made up by melting together two opposite activities." "Wherefore the spirit also, in so far as it manifests itself in a finite life, must be subject to the same law. The human soul, as is shown both by its passing actions and its inward characteristics, has its existence chiefly in two opposing impulses. Following the one impulse, it strives to establish itself as an individual. For increase, no less than sustenance, it draws what surrounds it to itself, weaving it into its life,

far been consistent with his presupposition that Christianity is of an evolutionary nature in working out his doctrine of sin. In fact, he actually utilizes the concept of sin to modify the otherwise rather monotonous continuity of his evolutionary theory, decorating and enriching it with more interesting though unwelcomed content.²⁴ The basic principles which he laid down have not been changed. Oman comments that:

Schleiermacher even comes within sight of the Darwinian idea and, in one important respect, goes beyond it. All that is in man, he says, is a strife which avails for progress, because he has his place in an ordered whole--- the significance of an ordered whole for the struggle of evolution being apt to be ignored. This conception of restless struggle and a growing individuality in the bosom of a Universe that rejoices in the unfolding of all its variety, is the keynote of the new age.²⁵

Why does Schleiermacher insist that the consciousness of sin is and always must be determined by the consciousness of grace? First, because "the consciousness of sin can be present only simultaneously with and as related to the God-consciousness." He means that we become conscious of sin when the God-consciousness already develops in us; otherwise there would be no resistance to it, and so no consciousness of sin at all, but "merely an independent activity of the flesh which, though in time it will quite naturally come to act as a resistance to the

and absorbing it into its own being. The other impulse, again, is the dread fear to stand alone over against the Whole, the longing to surrender oneself and be absorbed in a greater, to be taken hold of and determined." Speeches, pp.3f.

24. "The state of sin over its entire range actually presupposes the original perfection of man, and is indeed dependent upon it; and, accordingly, just as the latter conception expresses the unity of our development, so sin in turn represents its intermittent and disjointed character, though without in any way abrogating the unity itself." Christian Faith, p.278.

25. The Problem of Faith & Freedom, p.199.

spirit, cannot at that stage be regarded as sin in the proper sense."²⁶ It is clearly seen here that if the God-consciousness grows or is gradually awakened and realized, the consciousness of sin is intensified as a necessary condition for the receptivity of a redemptive-consciousness.²⁷ He argues:

It is of course true that the consciousness of sin comes from the law (Rom.7:24; 8:2), but as the law in the very multitude of its precepts is but an imperfect representation of the good, and even in the unity of an all-embracing maxim does not show how it can be obeyed, the knowledge of sin that arises out of it is ever in some respects incomplete and in some uncertain; and it is only from the absolute sinlessness and the perfect spiritual power of the Redeemer that we gain the full knowledge of sin.²⁸

Schleiermacher does agree that the law reflects man's incapacity for action, but he also asks whether law itself is an adequate representation of the good, it yet does not show man how it is to be obeyed. It is evident that if the law itself functions as knowledge while attempting to awaken one's religion, Schleiermacher shows in the very beginning that his basic concept of religion is not dependent on knowledge. No doubt he will, in this aspect, deny that law is valid for giving man a full knowledge of sin in relation to redemption, simply because here law is viewed as something objective.²⁹ In addition, sin itself is not of a substantial character. It always appears

26. Christian Faith, p.273.

27. Selbie: "The consciousness of sin is the consciousness of an antithesis to the divine will, an antithesis which is to be removed by redemption. God has, in other words, ordained sin in order to salvation. As the God-consciousness grows in us the apprehension of sin becomes more vivid, and sin consists in the defects in the reign of the divine in us over the flesh, defects which, in their turn, produce in us the sense of the need of redemption." op. cit., p.100.

28. Christian Faith, p.279.

29. According to Schleiermacher, God-consciousness and sin-consciousness both are subjective; and religion is one's very own, therefore, it must be subjective experience.

as something inefficient, incapable, in the augmentation of the Christian consciousness. As Wendland understands it, "sin, obviously appears as a remaining-behind of the highest goal, as a not-yet, as a transitional-point for a higher perfection, not as a guilty perversion or contradiction against the final-goal imposed by the divine."³⁰ Thus its existence is always related to something of positive character: sin itself is but something imperfect of negative nature, something which bespeaks inability in the context of total ability. It is but an inharmonious force in the process of the approximation of the great Whole. Its existence depends completely upon its opposite. If its opposite is in an undeveloped state, it will only exist as "the germ of sin," and will not be regarded as sin in the proper sense.³¹ At this stage of its embryonic existence, this does not mean that man is not in a state of sin, but that the sin-consciousness has not yet been aroused. In this case it means that sin does exist, insofar as one can be conscious of it.³²

As Cross put it: "Sin and the consciousness of sin are not to be separated. It is an experience of the God-consciousness being hindered by sensuousness from controlling the activities of life and it is expressed in a feeling of pain, dissatisfaction."³³ And this situation is related to the origin of evils: "The experience of a repression of the God-consciousness is connected with external events in such a way that they become evils, i.e., punishment of our sins, which is the

30. "Die Sünde erscheint hier offenbar als ein Zurückbleiben hinter dem höchsten Ziel, als ein Noch nicht, als Durchgangspunkt zu höherer Vollendung, nicht als schuldvolle Verkehrung und Widerspruch gegen das göttlich gesetzte Endziel." Die Religiöse Entwicklung Schleiermachers, p.223.

31. Christian Faith, p.273.

32. "If in any particular moment under examination God has formed part of our self-consciousness, but this God-consciousness has not been able to permeate the other active elements therein, thus determining the moment, then sin and the consciousness of sin are simultaneous, and the sensuous self-consciousness

experience of unblessedness."³⁴ Whenever the flesh prevails over the spirit, obstructions are present which oppose the original harmony of human development; and these obstructions become evils. Sin and evil are related to each other as cause and effect.

Mackintosh explains at this point that along with this more superficial view in Schleiermacher, there goes another profounder view hard to reconcile with it: "sin is a profound disturbance of 'human nature,' a complete incapacity for doing good which can only be cured by redemption, an abnormality and deformation on which all evil follows as its penalty."³⁵ There are, he says, two kinds of evil: "anything that gives rise to obstructions in human life so far as it is independent of human action, we call natural evil,"³⁶ and "what in bringing about such obstructions is really due to human action, we call 'social evil.' The term is preferable to 'moral' evil; for if we say 'moral' we suggest that the bad also as such (das Böse) is subsumed under the concept of evil." Again: "It is true that social evils too presuppose sin; what in one person issues from sin becomes an evil for another, and probably for himself as well"; for social evil is caused by the sin of one individual which produces evil consequences for others, owing to men's relation to one another.³⁷ But Schleiermacher prefers to use

by reason of its having been gratified is affected with pleasure, but the higher, owing to the impotence of the God-consciousness, with pain." Ibid., p.271.

33. Cross, op. cit., p.178.

34. Ibid., p.227.

35. Types of Modern Theology, p.84.

36. He explains: "Natural evils,...objectively considered, do not rise from sin; but as man, were he without sin, would not feel what are merely hindrances of sensuous functions as evils, the very fact that he does so feel them is due to sin, and hence that type of evil, subjectively considered, is a penalty of sin." Christian Faith, pp.316, 319.

37. Ibid., pp.316f.

different, more restricted terms in referring to particular cases. "But precisely on that account," he continues, "it seems the more necessary to insist, even by our use of terms, on the essential difference in the reference involved in the two."³⁸

After developing this point that evil is an effect, we see that according to his theory of the great harmonious Whole, the world as a unity of all natural forces, and God as the absolute Supreme Being behind this world-whole, it becomes evident that evil cannot be referred to any other than God, the absolute divine causality.³⁹ This is based on the theory that all natural forces are interdependent and appear as a unity of a world-whole which is absolutely dependent on this absolute Unity. Schleiermacher, after dividing evil into two kinds: natural and social, combines them. He writes:

(We maintain) evil and good are alike rooted in universal dependence on God, from this point of view there is no difference between these two types or classes of evil. To the one belong those conditions which we call natural evil, in which human existence is partially negated. To the other, which we name social evil, belong those conditions in which human activity is in conflict with another activity and is partially overcome and depressed; and here the influence of moral evil specially comes in. But clearly these two kinds of evil not only give rise to each other,...but they also overlap in thought, for the being of man consists only in the totality of his activities, and vice versa. The difference consists then principally in this, that the one is much more determined by the total forces of nature, and the other by the collective conditions of human activity.⁴⁰

38. *Ibid.*, p.316.

39. Schleiermacher says: "As regards sin in its relation to redemption, we must---if this section is to have any subject-matter at all---be able somehow to show that sin does actually exist in virtue of certain special divine activities; and what is more, we must do so, keeping in mind the fact that we have already ruled out as inadmissible any distinction in the divine causality between causing and permitting, or between creating and preserving." *Ibid.*, pp.325f.

40. *Ibid.*, p.185.

One step further Schleiermacher undertakes, notice the opening sentence in the passage quoted above: "evil and good are alike rooted in universal dependence on God." He is not only going to combine these two kinds of evil, but here even combines evil and good together, because they all have the same root in the universal dependence on God. Their differences do not essentially occupy two separate spheres, their magnitudes depend on the viewer, his viewpoint from afar or near, the way of looking at them. It just depends how one views them, evil actually could be good, good actually evil, or evil could be a cause of good, or good, a cause of evil. Up to this point, historically, it is very true, that in time the same activity appears as good and evil alternatively at certain different periods of time. As regards this, let Schleiermacher's own words be quoted on the suggestion:

... the world could exist apart from evil. The fact is rather that the very same activity or condition of a thing by which it enters on the one hand into human life as an evil, on the other hand is a cause of good, so that if we could remove the source of life's difficulties the conditions of life's progress too would disappear. This is true even of moral evil which only functions as evil in so far as it appears in external action: and it holds good not only accidentally because sin produces good effects sometimes in individuals and sometimes as a great historical lever, but as a general truth since sin only comes to be done by reason of that capacity of man to express his inner nature outwardly which is the source of all good.⁴¹

He affirms the alternate concept of evil and concludes at this point with another passage:

Now if sad experiences only occurred separately, although frequently, and were such that we could trace no connection between them, then they would hardly have been able to produce such an effect; but it is dependent on the fact that there are conditions which bring a persistent and

41. Ibid., p.187.

regularly renewed consciousness of life's obstacles. These, then are what we usually characterize by the term 'evil': it is to be maintained that all evil, in the full meaning of that word, is just as much wholly dependent upon God as that which is in opposition to it, i.e. good.⁴²

Schleiermacher's concept is of a good and an evil which are correlative and co-operative, working out for the betterment of human development. Therefore, evil is potentially good; though their external functions for a time may appear to man as evil or good,⁴³ yet they are all grounded in the universal divine causality. Thus evil and sin are strictly related to good and grace.⁴⁴ They are both ordained by God for the working out of this betterment as the necessary process of redemption.

Schleiermacher's basic concept of sin is not restricted to one immutable theory. Since he views sin itself as having no definite character, he is merely searching for all the existent possibilities from all different viewpoints. Whether one considers Schleiermacher close to blasphemy or whether, on the basis of his theory previously discussed, one sees him as merely one step further along in his logic, one cannot help but conclude that God ultimately is at once both the author of the possibilities of sin and not the author of sin. In the leading statement, he says:

As in our self-consciousness sin and grace are opposed to each other, God cannot be thought of as the Author of sin in the same sense as that in which He is the Author of

42. Ibid., pp.184f.

43. Schleiermacher writes: "I can only say that in human affairs there is no more absolute distinction between the true and the false than there is between the natural and the supernatural. There is no error, even of the most pernicious kind, which has not an admixture of truth or which is not connected with some truth, and there is no truth that does not include the possibility of error." Rowan, op. cit., II. p.261.

44. It is supposed that everything depends on the spiritual struggle, flesh vs. spirit, "for all activities of the flesh are good when subservient to the spirit, and all are evil when severed from it." Christian Faith, p.307.

redemption. But as we never have a consciousness of grace without a consciousness of sin, we must also assert that the existence of sin alongside of grace is ordained for us by God.⁴⁵

Of course all these possibilities, as referring to God, are themselves quite scientific. On the one hand, God is the absolute causal unity of this antinomy of the consciousness of sin and the consciousness of grace; while on the other hand the consciousness of sin, or just sin itself, is the indefinite cause, or the supplementary element which is to be applied wherever it is deemed necessary. Surprisingly enough, Schleiermacher's method of interpreting the Christian faith is always to organize his theological thoughts with a view toward reconciling everything to a sound unity. For the first time his theology is said to appear as an organic whole; but in his doctrine of sin he yet tears it up into fragments.⁴⁶

Schleiermacher sees sin and evil as thus ultimately grounded in the divine absolute causality, but only on the basis of their reference to redemption, since all experience in the religious consciousness is referred to this causality. On any other basis it must be denied, because sin is a contradiction to God's will; and as such it cannot refer back to the

45. Ibid., p.326. We see how Schleiermacher, with this shifting theory, skilfully avoids departing from his doctrine of sin at this point and toward the verge of Manichaeism or of Pelagianism; especially the latter, which "sacrifices the practical religious interest to the theoretical which demands that every vital activity shall have the same relation to the divine causality," thereby "minimizing and by degrees annulling the antithesis of sin and grace." Ibid., pp.330, 335. The former heresy surrenders "the theoretical religious interest in the reality of the divine omnipotence, in favour of the practical interest attaching to the idea that evil is real in the most unqualified sense, so as all the more to bring out the necessity that the perfect good should counteract it redemptively." Ibid., p.330.

46. "We are conscious of the spirit as one, while the flesh is a manifold, and a manifold composed of diverse elements, so that the spirit cannot stand in a uniform relation to it." Ibid., p.275.

divine causality, for it would seem to delineate God as the Source of evil. The sources of evil are in man's sin.⁴⁷ So far as his relation to the world is concerned, man is free; but his freedom is eventually quite limited, and this limitation appears as a hindrance to his life and is apprehended as evil.⁴⁸ On this basis man is free to sin; yet he must pay the price for committing it. The limitation of this freedom must sooner or later indicate to him that he has breached the original harmony of the world-whole. As Schleiermacher says: "The spirit's demand is always the same, the spirit itself, wherever it is less able to work effectively, appears as a baffled and defeated force, and the subject therefore as in a state of sin."⁴⁹

Where actually do these forces of hindrances to human life come from? What is the representation of these sources of disturbance? Schleiermacher raises several difficulties for our acceptance of any attempted doctrinal representation of the dangerous spiritual beings as a kingdom and with their chief, called the devil. Would God allow this kind of existence? And why after they fall, are they so dangerous? Is the devil instrumental and active in the punishment of sin?⁵⁰ These are typical of the problems that now arise; and they are all full of contradiction. To quote his own words: "The fairly frequent idea that the devil is the instrument of God in the punishment of the wicked, is inconsistent with his antagonism to the divine purpose."⁵¹

Whatever may be the purpose of forming the idea of a devil, the concept of "devil" would seem to have no real positive

47. Ibid., pp.318ff.

48. Ibid., p.315.

49. Ibid., p.275.

50. Ibid., pp.161ff.

51. Ibid., p.163.

or negative ideas to validate its existence, and fundamentally contradict Schleiermacher's rejection of any objective knowledge of either a positive or a negative stimulating force.⁵² To allow such an existence means to destroy his whole system of theology. Belief in the existence of a devil or fallen angels is not part of religious experience, according to Schleiermacher, because these cannot be an expression of Christian consciousness. In order to avoid inconsistency, no modifications of the concept of the existence of a devil or fallen angels will be valid. He argues that even though certain passages in Scripture refer to the devil, "there is still no reason for our accepting this notion as a permanent element in Christian doctrine and defining it accordingly so accurately that everything attributed to the devil could be conceived as a consistent whole."⁵³ Finally, Schleiermacher points out that:

Those who actually go so far as to maintain that living faith in Christ is in some way conditioned by belief in the devil ought to be on their guard lest, by so doing, they depreciate Christ and unduly exalt themselves. For the ultimate meaning is that salvation by Christ would be less necessary if there were no devil; and so, on the one hand, salvation appears to be only a help against an external enemy, while, on the other hand, man would be well able to help himself if there were no devil and evil had its seat solely in human nature.⁵⁴

Another thing to be discussed is the proposition that sin, guilt, and evil belong, in their totality, to the human race. Schleiermacher writes: "Just as the human race is the proper sphere of sin, and sin the corporate act of the race, so

52. The writer feels that Schleiermacher even hesitates to affirm God's personality in relation to us except through the "world-impression," i.e., we gain our knowledge of Him from our own consciousness. The devil, according to Schleiermacher, is the acme of nothingness.

53. Christian Faith, p.167.

54. Ibid., p.169.

the whole world in its relation to man is the proper sphere of evil, and evil the corporate suffering of the race."⁵⁵ As we have pointed out earlier, man does not exist alone, but in relation to humanity, i.e., as a constituent part of the whole of mankind. The significance of the individual lies in the corporate life of humanity. Schleiermacher not only adopts this theory to delineate that which works out for good in the course of human development (cf. Chapter V), but also applies the same theory to explain the bad influences which come via the total operation of human activity. Because the unity of the race is grounded in a common consciousness of sin exists for the individual in both the self- and the race-consciousness. In fact, sin is properly understood only in the context of the universal collective life of mankind. As Schleiermacher wrote:

If sin as an organic whole can be rightly understood only as the corporate action of the human race, its causal action relatively to evil can only be understood from the same point of view. In fact, the most definite expression of this conviction lies...in a general statement that throughout the human race as a whole.⁵⁶

There is also actual sin and original sin, Schleiermacher understands them in the same way. As to their relationship to each other, Schleiermacher adds:

It is to be understood rather as implying that in the individual original sin is the sufficient ground of all actual sins, so that only something else outside of him, and not anything new within him, is needed for the generation of actual sin. Original sin is purely a thing received only in the degree in which the individual is not yet spontaneously active, and it ceases to be such in the degree in which that activity is developed.⁵⁷

To sum up, Schleiermacher depicts sin as the conflict of

55. Ibid., p.317.

56. Ibid., p.320.

57. Ibid., p.286.

flesh and spirit, as a hindrance to life⁵⁸ in the development of the religious consciousness. It is, therefore, an inevitable outcome of human nature as such, and not an external inheritance from Adam. Cross concludes that "sin being the joint guilt of the race, evil is its joint punishment";⁵⁹ and, "sin is a historical phenomenon in human consciousness and pertains to all peoples and ages."⁶⁰ Mackintosh adds that sinful solidarity links the generations, and that "sin is stored or founded in humanity, and kept in circulation by social influence."⁶¹ Finally this concept is summed up with a comprehensive statement by Cross:

Evil is thus produced by human freedom, but is grounded ultimately in the divine causality. But evil is not in-and-for itself, but only in reference to sin, as sin also is only in reference to the redemption. Consequently evil becomes a source of stimulus to the consciousness of the need of redemption. Otherwise evil would seem to be joined to sin by arbitrary divine determination.⁶²

58. Ibid., p.315.

59. The Theology of Schleiermacher, p.191.

60. Ibid., p.179.

61. Types of Modern Theology, p.85.

62. The Theology of Schleiermacher, p.191.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTOLOGY

Schleiermacher's doctrine of Christ is, on the whole, elaborated in his own speculative imagination and evolves from his pious love for the Redeemer. We have seen that he never got away from the influence of the Moravians.¹ He affirms that the Redeemer possesses His distinctive worth (eigenthümliche Würde)² and unique originality³ as One over against all others, so exclusive of other men that no analogy⁴ adequately describes His person and absolute dignity. He enters into human existence appearing, for the first time in history, as a person of essential sinlessness and absolute perfection. His appearance and the inner character of His personality are of an archetypal form entirely rooted in the original creative act of God; and in Him is a perfect union of the human and the divine. This

1. Mackintosh points out that the Moravian heritage never quite disappeared: "In his warm love for Jesus, Schleiermacher never ceased to be a Moravian. But, as may be seen from his Life of Jesus, his conceptions of our Lord are often more imaginative than historical." Types of Modern Theology, p.86; cf. The Person of Jesus Christ, (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1912), p.250.

2. Schleiermacher, Der Christliche Glaube, (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1884), II. p.28; cf. Christian Faith, p.377.

3. Mackintosh: "Christ... 'is distinguished from all others as Redeemer alone and for all,' nor did He ever need redemption Himself. Thus in opposition to the cosmopolitan enlightenment of the time Schleiermacher insists steadily on the uniqueness of Christ." He is "the heart of Christianity." Types of Modern Theology, p.69.

4. Schleiermacher explained: "It might be argued, this is the fundamental exaggeration into which believers fall when they regard Christ in the mirror of their own imperfection; and this exaggeration continually perpetuates itself in the same manner, since believers in all ages read into Jesus whatever they are able to conceive as ideal in this sphere." Christian Faith, p.378; cf. Mackintosh: "No one can doubt that when he speaks openly as

union, in terms of dignity, is at once exemplary (Vorbildliche) and ideal (Urbildlichkeit).⁵ Strangely enough, Schleiermacher, in his theological system, does not usually follow the path of supernaturalism at all, until he comes to the doctrine of Christ.⁶

One sees Schleiermacher circling around an area, actually confronting something that cannot satisfactorily be explained⁷ by his all-validating key to religion, i.e., the feeling of absolute dependence. Still, at certain points, he does correlate his ideas intelligibly, at the risk of contradicting the remainder of his theological system.⁸ This is so because Schleiermacher too seriously attributes worth to the religious self-consciousness. Bridging the entire gap between the human and the divine, Schleiermacher consistently propounds a "theology of reconciliation" and a "continuity of evolutionism". This, in turn, means that even apart from his Christology, his soteriology lacks nothing: he sees the divine in the human, and the

a believer the Person of Christ takes on absolute dimensions; there is no analogy for Jesus, he writes, and there dwelt in Him a spiritual power such as no human calculus can reckon." Types of Modern Theology, pp.72f.

5. Schleiermacher, Der Christliche Glaube, II. p.29.

6. Lichtenberger writes: "All that Christ has been, He has become by a primitive communication of God owing to which He was freed from the influence of sin. On this point, Schleiermacher has remained faithful to the supernaturalistic point of view of the traditional theology." op. cit., pp.153f.

7. Schleiermacher writes: "My Christian feeling is conscious of a divine spirit indwelling in me, which is distinct from my reason, I will never give up seeking for this spirit in the deepest depths of the soul's nature; and when my Christian feeling becomes conscious of a Son of God, who differs from us in another way than merely being better than the best of us, I will never cease to search for the genesis of this Son of God in the deepest depths of nature, and to say to myself, that I shall most likely learn to understand the second Adam just as soon as the first Adam, or Adams, whose coming into existence I must also admit without being able to understand." Rowan, op. cit., II. p.281.

human within that great whole which is absolutely dependent on the Supreme Unity, God. The process of redemption is a gradual approximation, ever progressive, of feeling, becoming, and doing. But Schleiermacher's theory of salvation could conceivably do away⁹ with the Supreme Figure of Jesus. Schleiermacher, being aware that his doctrine of Christ will be virtually an abstract superfluity in relation to the rest of his system,¹⁰ needs only to affirm a peculiar doctrine twice as untenable as what he had---without knowing precisely how he derives it, whether on Scriptural (biblische) or traditional (kirchliche) grounds.¹¹ All of which indicates that he derived it from his own speculative imagination.¹² Of course he would deny¹³ that Christ is

8. Mackintosh points out that "while Schleiermacher asserts---no one more emphatically---the central and redeeming place of Christ, it is doubtful whether his speculative presuppositions permit him to hold such a person as either real or possible." The Person of Jesus Christ, pp.254f; cf. Lichtenberger: "What is this ideal type of man which Jesus is said to have realized? Is it not a pure abstraction, or rather a contradiction in terms; for can a single individual realize the type of the whole of humanity?" op. cit., p.154.

9. Mackintosh writes: "He himself gained less than might have been hoped from the new point of view, and failed to satisfy some deep Christian instincts, this was owing to defects inherent in his theoretic notion of what salvation is. Its relation to the world too much predominates. Redeemed men are men liberated from the oppression of finite causes, and dependent solely on the Absolute Causality, rather than forgiven sinners, living in fellowship with God the Father." The Person of Jesus Christ, p.254.

10. Mackintosh has pointed out that "in his Christology more clearly perhaps than elsewhere we see how persistently Schleiermacher strove to escape from the region of abstract ideas into that of veritable fact." Types of Modern Theology, p.85.

11. Carl Clemen, Schleiermachers Glaubenslehre, (Gieszen: J. Richer'sche Verlagbuchhandlung, 1905), p.90.

12. Mackintosh: "This is to make an imaginary Christ, in a vain effort to be wiser than the New Testament." Types of Modern Theology, p.90.

13. As a matter of fact, his Christology is constantly affirmed as vitally important to redemption; yet, when related

superfluous to his system; but to offset this suspicion he must accentuate the Redeemer's position within. Even negatively, this is important, whether or not we are actually to pronounce his theological system superfluous. If superfluity is actually an issue here, then either Christ as presented in Schleiermacher's system is superfluous to the rest of the system, or his elaboration of this phase of theology is superfluous specifically to his Christology.¹⁴ Yet Schleiermacher seemingly founded for us difficulty with this challenge: we have seen how he is an old hand at reconciling apparent opposites and inconsistencies.¹⁵ With some sort of speculation and imagination, somewhat along the lines of the Johannine Gospel,¹⁶ he does elaborate a Christology of his own, and in certain aspects actually does reconcile it with his theological system.¹⁷ Just as the dignity and activity of the Redeemer are "intimately related and mutually determined,"¹⁸ so also the person of Christ and the work of Christ are inseparable and "each finds in the other its full expression." Nevertheless, in accordance with current

to his theological thought, particularly at a comparably earlier stage, it does not seem as important as we have been led to believe.

14. It seems that Schleiermacher possesses two soteriologies, the one being his Christology and the other his whole theology, excluding his Christology.

15. Schleiermacher affirms: "But the truly divine element is the glorious clearness to which the great idea He [Jesus] came to exhibit attained in His soul. This idea was, that all that if finite requires a higher mediation to be in accord with the Deity, and that for man under the power of the finite and particular, and too ready to imagine the divine itself in this form, salvation is only to be found in redemption." Speeches, p.246.

16. Wendland: "Schleiermacher ist nicht paulinischer, sondern johanneischer Theologie. Nicht der tod Jesu ist ihm die Hauptsache, sondern das Leben Jesu und die von diesem ausgehende anziehende und gewinnende Kraft." op. cit., p.181.

17. Christian Faith, p.476.

18. Ibid., p.375.

theological practice, we may deal with the person and work of Christ separately.

1. The Person of Christ.

The secret of Christ's energetic personality lies in His possession of the potency of the God-consciousness in the full sway of all the activities of His life. The essential difference between Christ and other men is that only Christ ever attained the highest point of human development,¹⁹ and only in Him has the creation of humanity been first perfected. This is so because His human nature is completely exhausted²⁰ by His "absolutely powerful God-consciousness," i.e., "the existence of God in Him."²¹ In Him all actual sin, together with all possibilities of it, are excluded. Yet His freedom from sin does not conflict with His identity with human nature.²² As Cross put it: His human nature becomes a "perfect organ for the reception and presentation of the divine," and therefore we may say of Him: "In the Redeemer God became man."²³ Schleiermacher asserted that it was Christ who alone could be destined gradually "to quicken the whole human race into higher life." Anyone not accepting Christ in this universal way as the divine revelation cannot desire that Christianity should be an enduring

19. "There is no reason why we should not believe that the appearing of such a life is the result of the power of development which resides in our human nature." Ibid., p.63.

20. Dilthey: "In Christus ist das Ideal der menschlichen Vollkommenheit, als Erscheinung und Abglanz des moralischen Wesens der Gottheit selber, daher als in Gott enthalten und aus ihm hervorgegangen, in einem religiösen Symbol von bleibender Gültigkeit ausgedrückt." op. cit., p.158.

21. Christian Faith, p.387.

22. "The Redeemer, then is like all men in virtue of the identity of human nature, but distinguished from them all by the constant potency of His God-consciousness, which was a veritable existence of God in Him." Ibid., p.385.

23. Cross, op. cit., p.208; same passage found in Selbie, op. cit., p.120.

phenomenon. Notwithstanding all this, however, even the most rigorous view of Christ's superiority over all other men does not hinder us from regarding His appearing, or even His incarnation as the Son of God, as a natural fact.²⁴ Christ is the subject of the God-consciousness, historically realized.²⁵ His existence should be accepted universally as divine revelation, and all consciousness of redemption must be referred back to Him. "All Christian piety rests upon the appearing of the Redeemer," Schleiermacher writes. "The same thing is true of Him, too, namely, that nothing concerning Him can be set up as real doctrine unless it is connected with His redeeming causality and can be traced to the original impression²⁶ made by His existence."²⁷ Redemption signifies essentially this: that however weak and suppressed the God-consciousness may be in human nature, it still is aroused by the incoming power of Christ and strengthened by His abiding influence;²⁸ and, on the other hand, what Schleiermacher calls the Redeemer's original purpose to present Himself to man so that man can first see the revelation of God in Him must also be included in the total picture. He argues²⁹ that "Christ himself seeks above all to impress upon

24. Christian Faith, pp.63f.

25. Dilthey: "Später ist Christus die spezifische Vollendung der Menschennatur, sonach nicht Vorbild, sondern Urbild, nicht eine Kraft, die das in uns Liegende zu allgemeiner Wirkung bringt, sondern eine solche, die durch die Macht der erscheinenden Vollendung uns zu sich hinanzieht." op. cit., p.160.

26. "The individual even to-day receives from the picture of Christ, which exists in the community as at once a corporate act and a corporate possession, the impression of the sinless perfection of Jesus, which becomes for him at the same time the perfect consciousness of sin and the removal of the misery." And, "all those aberrations of the Christian Church, however much they may resemble the sinful corporate life, there is still a tendency which in every manifestation---nay, constantly even in the setting up of the concepts of truth and goodness---falls more or less a prey to non-existence, but which...corresponds to its origin, and consequently, in spite of all reactions, will also increasingly make itself manifest." Christian Faith, pp.364f.

us that through him we come to the Father, and that the Father abides in us."³⁰ What kind of a presentation of the Person of Christ does Schleiermacher give us? An Absolute Figure presented in a relative sense.³¹ He is at once both a mediating example³² who can successfully control and govern His religious self-consciousness, and an exemplary ideality³³ who possesses absolute perfection based on the presence of the God-consciousness in Him as His own personal being; in short, He is an historical individual as well as an ideal Person.³⁴ In Schleiermacher's book The Christmas Eve (Weihnachtsfeier), Edward speaks:³⁵

He [referring to the individual] finds his redemption only in Man as such, Man in himself [the man behind the man, der Mensch-an-sich]. Therein he finds in fact that very oneness of the eternal being and becoming of the spirit which can manifest itself upon this planet, and rise in every one only be every one contemplating and loving all that becomes, including himself, in the eternal Being alone. And in so far as he appears as in the process of becoming, he wills to be nothing else than a thought of the eternal Being; nor will he be grounded in any other eternal Being than in that which is one and the same with the ever changing and returning process. Hence the oneness of being and becoming thus indicated, and is found eternally in humanity, because humanity is and becomes eternally as the essentially Man, as Man in himself.³⁶

27. Ibid., p.125.

28. Ibid., p.476.

29. In a letter to his wife.

30. Rowan, op. cit., II. p.326.

31. Mackintosh: "It has been maintained that for Schleiermacher the being of our Lord is supernatural only in a relative sense." The Person of Jesus Christ, pp.253f.

32. Selbie: "It is in Christ that the love of God is manifested and through Christ that the love of man for God is awakened." op. cit., p.104.

33. Christian Faith, p.378.

34. Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, p.72; cf. Christian Faith, p.392.

35. At the end of The Christmas Eve we find this statement (in the appendix by Dr. Carl Schwarz): "The speeches which thus follow, form the kernel of the whole production; and they contain in germ, and in the most graceful and accessible form, the

What Edward tries to explain is that the eternal Being, in the process of becoming, is identified both with temporal humanity and with eternity. "Man-in-himself," or the "God-man," must display human self-cognition and be, from the very beginning, the Light of man. And we, in our turn are born again through the Spirit, in and of the Church. The Spirit itself only proceeds from the Son, who being born originally of God, requires no new birth and hence can be absolutely the Son of Man. All that preceded Him was a prefiguration of, and related to Him; in fact, only through such a relation to Him could anything be divine or even truly good.³⁷ Schleiermacher sees Christ as the Eternal Figure who once appeared absolutely miraculous and perfect, and at the same time natural in the sphere of human life. Christ is "the integrating factor in Christianity."³⁸ Oman wrote that Christ as seen by Schleiermacher is "the originator of the Christian intuition of the world"; "He is the centre of all mediation and to have the Christian view is to be in a position to recognize His place when He is shown to us."³⁹

The appearance of this Absolute Figure is not absolutely supernatural: it also accords with the laws of human nature. Schleiermacher freely admits that a Redeemer who could not Himself belong to what Schleiermacher calls "the corporate life of sinfulness" could therefore hardly be brought into being via natural procreation. Furthermore, by the same token, the reproductive power of the human species could hardly suffice to bring

fundamental thoughts of Schleiermacher's Christology, and even of his whole theology. The various sides of Schleiermacher's nature, and the spiritual tendencies which so wonderfully met in him, are assigned to several speakers." (Transl. by W. Hastie, Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1890), p.77.

36. Ibid., p.70.

37. Ibid., pp.71f.

38. Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, p.86.

39. Speeches, p.xl.

forth One through whom something never before existent in the species is to be introduced.⁴⁰ But Schleiermacher, feeling that even these assertions represent rather an inadequate expression of things, goes on to say that even

the more precise definition of this supernatural conception as one in which there was no male activity has no connexion of any kind with the essential elements in the peculiar dignity of the Redeemer; and hence, in and by itself, is no constituent part of Christian doctrine. Whoever accepts this definition, therefore, accepts it only on the ground of the narratives involving it contained in the New Testament writings; hence belief in it, like belief in many matters of fact which have just as little necessary connexion with the dignity and the work of the Redeemer, belongs solely to the doctrine of Scripture.⁴¹

Schleiermacher will not follow along the path of an absolute supernatural conception with such a so-called precise definition; yet, on the other hand, he asserts that alongside this reproductive power one must postulate a creative activity combined with human activity, if one would seek to nullify the sexual aspect of procreation---"an influence which would involve participation in the universal sinfulness."⁴² Schleiermacher consequently concluded that "everything rests upon the higher influence which, as a creative divine activity, could alter both the paternal and the maternal influence in such a way that all ground for sinfulness was removed."⁴³ Procreation might be perfectly natural: certainly such creative divine activity could alone suffice to complete the natural imperfection of the begotten child. Yet the general notion of a supernatural conception must be seen as indispensable if we are not to allow the Redeemer's own pre-eminence to be minimized.⁴⁴ Schleiermacher goes

40. Christian Faith, p.404.

41. Ibid., pp.405f.

42. Ibid., pp.404f.

43. Ibid., p.405.

44. Loc. cit.

on to affirm the Redeemer's unique personality with reference to the very attempt of analyzing or even describing His real character which easily leads to confusion. "When the expression 'Jesus Christ' is used," Schleiermacher asserts, it is done "to indicate not only the subject of the union of the two natures,...but also the divine nature of the Redeemer from all eternity before its union with the human nature; so that this union no longer appears as an element that goes to constitute the person, Jesus Christ, but rather as an act of this person Himself."⁴⁵ True, the New Testament says nothing of this, using even the term "Son of God" "only of the subject of this union, and not of the divine element in it before the union."⁴⁶ Schleiermacher even opposes the use of the term "nature" to refer to both the divine and the human,⁴⁷ arguing that if in Jesus Christ the divine nature and human nature are combined into one Person, there can hardly be that sort of constant unity of life in Christ, and he questions: "how can the unity of life coexist with the duality of natures, unless the one gives way to the other, if the one exhibits a larger and other a narrower range, or unless they melt into each other, both systems of ways of action and laws really becoming one in the one life?"⁴⁸ Schleiermacher's intention is to show that all these analyses of the Redeemer's unique character are confusing and can but beget unthinkable erroneous expressions.

Schleiermacher believes that to combine these two natures

45. Ibid., pp.391f.

46. Ibid., p.392.

47. He says: "But the word 'nature' is particularly ill-adapted for such a common use," and he explains: "For in one sense we actually oppose God and nature to one another, and hence in this sense cannot attribute a nature to God. Nature in this sense is for us the summary of all finite existence." Loc. cit.

48. Ibid., p.393.

into one Person is ridiculous, all attempts to do so being unconvincing at the point of producing a Christ who could be truly alive and credible. The very expression, "two natures in one Person," has always vacillated---so Schleiermacher says ---between the opposite errors of (a) mixing the two natures to form a third which would be neither---divine nor human, or of (b) keeping the two natures separate but neglecting the unity of the Person for the sake of more distinctly separating ---or, in order to keep the unity of the Person inviolate, disturbing the necessary balance by subordinating and thereby limiting one nature to the other.⁴⁹ The credal formulation regarding Christ is denounced⁵⁰ for its improper and speculative expression of Him. Also denounced are (a) the Docetic heresy of linking with God so tightly as to obscure the genuineness of His humanity, and (b) the Ebionite heresy of excluding "any essential distinction between Christ and an exceptional man," both being very un-Christian misrepresentations.⁵¹

The Redeemer's unique origin is a miraculous manifestation which may be traced back only to the creative act of God. In the event of such a life and an exclusive personality, the divine side of reality is externalized. With this abiding example, the God-consciousness of which is self-communicative, all humanity is quickened for the divine dimension. Christ is the living Awakener of the living religious self-consciousness. Of course, Schleiermacher says, the God-consciousness must be seen as having a supernatural origin, even as we see that the entire human race is included in a sinful corporate life. But when related to the Redeemer, the new corporate life seems miraculous yet is "no miracle" at all, but simply "the supernatural

49. Ibid., p.394.

50. Ibid., pp.391f.

51. Ibid., p.396.

becoming natural, since every exceptional force attracts mass to itself and holds it fast."⁵² Schleiermacher thus depicts the Redeemer somewhat like the ferment in flour, saying that in like manner His activity has penetrated the total human sphere. He is the unfolding fountainhead of universal spiritual life (*allgemeinen geistigen Lebens*). All that He has introduced into human life is presented as "a new creation." Schleiermacher therefore does not hesitate to call Christ "the Second Adam, the beginner or originator of this more perfect human life, or the completion of the creation of man."⁵³

But Schleiermacher does not view the Redeemer's appearance as absolutely supra-rational: "Christ could not in any way be distinguished as Redeemer from the totality of mankind if those phases of His life by which He accomplishes redemption were explicable by means of the reason which dwells equally in all other men. For ⁱⁿthem those conditions would also be found in others, and they also could work redemption."⁵⁴ Schleiermacher then admits that the dimension of "the supra-rational certainly has a place in the Redeemer and the redeemed"; but "the highest goal that is set for these workings of redemption is always a human state which not only would obtain the fullest recognition from the common human reason," but in which also no one could ever distinguish that which the divine spirit effects from that which human reason effects, even within the selfsame individual. Inasmuch, then, as human reason would be completely one with the divine Spirit, the latter might in turn be regarded as reason's "highest enhancement...so that the difference between the two is made to disappear."⁵⁵

52. *Ibid.*, p.365.

53. *Ibid.*, pp.367, 501.

54. *Ibid.*, p.64.

55. *Ibid.*, p.65.

Again: "Any distinction between the natural and the supernatural, between the comprehensible and the incomprehensible, I do not, upon the whole, recognize. Everything is in one sense natural, and in another supernatural. Even that the Son of God was made man must, in a higher sense, be natural."⁵⁶ Thus, Christ is presented as a model man, archetypal and unique, historical and ideal, with both the divine and the human dimension identified in Him; He is fully der Mensch an sich.

2. The Work of Christ.

Christ is treated as Redeemer because it is with regard to His work of imparting the God-consciousness to us, thereby augmenting our human development, that we are conscious of our need of a higher life. Christ gives to man that incentive which is the original strength for human advancement. Faith arises only through what Schleiermacher calls the agency or efficacy (Wirksamkeit) of Christ, not from any natural constitution (Beschaffenheit) of man. Nothing building up independently in him of the whole series of Christ's gracious and mediated workings can alter his relation to God or effects his justification. At this point merit is altogether powerless.⁵⁷ The importance of the Redeemer's activity in the Christian's consciousness of grace is clearly seen in all of this. The act of the redeemed is really the act of the Redeemer: the union or identity of two acts, (a) the Redeemer's activity and (b) the redeemed's receptivity, is here involved.⁵⁸ Faith in Christ implies recognizing Him as the agency, within the Christian's own consciousness, of our blessed relation to God. Christ Himself holds and performs an agency toward mankind that no other being

56. Rowan, op. cit., II. pp.260f.

57. Christian Faith, p.504.

58. Ibid., p.426.

could effect, since His relation to God is such that the absolutely powerful God-consciousness is His whole personal consciousness, i.e., the existence of God in Him.⁵⁹ He is the only Person or Pattern in human existence who can originate the divine world-forming (weltbildend) movement.⁶⁰ The revelation caused by His life means that the self-communicativeness of His powerful God-consciousness is imparted to us in such manner that we may participate in His redeeming activity, in the divine creative activity which is rendered possible by the original perfection of man and of the world, and which is even now propagated in the totality of human nature. Thus Schleiermacher actually includes the redemption in the creation.⁶¹ Redemption is to be understood as a process of creation. God's revelation in the world, when referred back to the idea of human development, is mediated only by the influences of His possession of this self-communicating and absolutely powerful God-consciousness. Schleiermacher quotes Jesus' saying: "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and He to whom the Son shall reveal Him." "This consciousness of the singularity of His knowledge of God and of His existence in God, of the original way in which this knowledge was in Him, and of the power thereof to communicate

59. *Ibid.*, pp.387, 426f.

60. In Schleiermacher's own words: "The activity of the Redeemer is world-forming, and its object is human nature, in the totality of which the powerful God-consciousness is to be implanted as a new vital principle. He takes possession of the individuals relatively to the whole, wherever He finds those in whom His activity does not merely remain, but from when, moving on, it can work upon others through the revelation of His life." *Ibid.*, p.427.

61. Wendland writes: "Schleiermacher wendet sachlich gegen die Rationalisten ein, dass sie für das Spezifische des Christentums, für den Glauben an die Erlösung und Wiedergeburt kein Verständnis haben. Sie reden nur von einem allmählichen Fortschreiten auf Grund der natürlichen Anlagen und Kräfte, die Gott dem Menschen gegeben hat. Man kann sagen, dass Schleiermacher insofern mit ihnen ging, als auch er Schöpfung und Erlösung in einen einzigen göttlichen Ratschluss Zusammenfasste und die Erlösung schon in der Schöpfung einbegriffen sein liess." *op. cit.*, p.230.

itself and awake religion, was at once the consciousness of His office as mediator and of His divinity."⁶² He asserts this even more intensively in the Christian Faith:

It is only through Him that the human God-consciousness becomes an existence of God in human nature, and only through the rational nature that the totality of finite powers can become an existence of God in the world, that in truth He alone mediates all existence of God in the world and all revelation of God through the world, in so far as He bears within Himself the whole new creation which contains and develops the potency of the God-consciousness.⁶³

Thus, Schleiermacher is seen as affirming the exclusive worth of Christ as the only mediator for all. At the same time, this affirmation is hard to square with a system which is undeniably predominated by a pantheistic world view. Schleiermacher means that communion with God, or the Christian consciousness of grace, comes only through the act of the Redeemer. There is no spiritual life which is not referred to the activity of His redeeming causality; there is no Christian consciousness which is not referred to the relation to Christ. As he says:

The view that in every Christian affection there must be a relation to Christ does not in the least contradict our proposition. Much more is this the case when the pious feeling comes to expression as an actual moment in the form

62. Speeches, p.247.

63. Christian Faith, p.388. One may quote Schleiermacher's earlier viewpoint in this regard, in the Speeches: "He [Christ] never maintained He was the only mediator, the only one in whom His idea actualized itself. All who attach themselves to Him and form His Church should also be mediators with Him and through Him." p.248. Pfeleiderer points out that the view of "the possibility of a more perfect religion than Christianity Schleiermacher afterwards limited to a continuous development within Christianity itself, just as in his later Glaubenslehre he no longer regarded Christ as one mediator among several, but as the only one whose consciousness of God was perfect and of unceasing efficacy for the whole race." op. cit., p.54; cf. Wendland, op. cit., p.151.

of pleasure or pain. For the Christian faith, however, the incapacity implied in religious pain must be ascribed to lack of fellowship with the Redeemer, while, on the other hand, the ease in evoking pious feeling which goes along with religious pleasure is regarded as a possession which comes to us from this fellowship. Thus it is evident that, within the Christian communion, there can be no religious experience which does not involve a relation to Christ.⁶⁴

What kind of a relation to Christ causes pleasure or pain in one's spiritual experience? What Schleiermacher says in another passage of the union with Christ may throw some light in this aspect: "The state of union is the real possession of blessedness in the consciousness that Christ in us is the center of our life, and this in such a way that this possession exists solely as His gift, which, since we receive it simply by His will that we should have it, is His blessing and His peace."⁶⁵

Thus, if our relationship to Christ is understood as that union with Christ which is the source of blessedness and peace, and if it is truly in accord with the original destiny of humanity, then, as this state of union with Christ is more strongly established, the disturbance of life called "evil" (the effect of its cause, "sin") will gradually disappear.⁶⁶ Evil is transmuted from a force of limitation to one's religious life into a service for one's religious guidance and progress. In Schleiermacher's theory of salvation, Christ is the mediator in the sense of being "the Starter" in control of the religious self-consciousness, which, after being awakened or guided, will participate in the redeeming process of world-forming. The result of this religious control, which brings things back into their original harmony, is understood as reconciliation and eventually means

64. Christian Faith, p.132.

65. Ibid., p.433.

66. Ibid., p.458.

that Christ has brought men into the fellowship⁶⁷ of His blessedness, freeing them gradually from all hindrances of life. Mackintosh points out that "an odd feature in terminology" is involved here, because "the word 'Reconciliation' is used not (as in the New Testament) for something done by God, but for a process in the human soul."⁶⁸ Pfleiderer sums up at this point in more detail:

Schleiermacher rejects the idea of a transcendental reconciliation through the atoning sufferings of Christ as the representative of mankind before God, and puts in its place the historical view of the matter, according to which Christ by the total impression of his personality had such a strengthening and beautifying influence on men's religious consciousness that they felt themselves saved and reconciled, that is, delivered, or gradually being delivered, from the hindering and miserable contradiction between the higher and lower self-consciousness.⁶⁹

Schleiermacher's interpretation of Christ's suffering is opaque because it evidently involves his concept of sin. Basically, he disagrees with what is sometimes called "woundstheology," which did not view the totality of Christ's suffering but had rather allegorically trivialized the whole into a sensuous, fragmentary interpretation of an artificial construction.⁷⁰ He pointed out that what is most significant is Christ's sympathy with sin,⁷¹ or His attitude of submitting to the suffering and describes this as "The real meaning of the statements that

67. Selbie writes: "New relation to God" is called "Justification," "Conversion" is described as "new life," both are involved "in the participation in Christ's blessedness and they are not to be separated." op. cit., p.194.

68. Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, p.91. Selbie says that Schleiermacher develops his doctrine of reconciliation altogether "from the subjective standpoint, and in so doing departs from the Church tradition which assigns an objective validity to the death and suffering of Christ as a means of reconciliation between God and man." op. cit., p.171.

69. Development of Theology, p.117.

70. Christian Faith, p.459.

71. Ibid., p.458.

Christ by His willing surrender of Himself to suffering and death satisfied the divine justice, as that which had ordained the connexion between sin and evil, and thus set us free from the punishment of sin,"⁷² or---as he calls it---the "passive obedience"⁷³ of Christ, springing out of His self-denying love. It is to be understood here that what Schleiermacher asserts is not that suffering per se is of value, or that it carries "vicarious satisfaction,"⁷⁴ but that the intention to which Christ firmly held until the end is worthy to be called to our attention.⁷⁵ His suffering for us is not for the punishment of sin, but to set us free from it, i.e., from our liability to punishment.⁷⁶ According to this viewpoint, should Christ be punished for any so-called "hindrances of life," i.e., "sin"? To Him, or to the absolutely powerful God-consciousness in His life, sin and evil are as nothing; and, on the other hand, the gradual removal of guilt comes not by His substitution in our place (as in suffering), but by our union with the One who has set up for us the new principle of life.

72. Ibid., pp.458, 462.

73. Schleiermacher writes: "If we begin by dividing the obedience of Christ into the active and passive, we are by no means to imagine that these two are so divided that they occupied different parts of His life, as is commonly supposed--that the passive obedience began only with His arrest, while the active had expressed itself from the beginning of His public life up to that point." But when looked at more closely, then, "active and passive obedience were bound up with each other at every moment." Ibid., pp.452f.

74. Cross: "The doctrine of vicarious satisfaction wrongly makes God the arbitrary author of Christ's sufferings, removes punishment from its natural connection with the morally bad, and so ignores the unity of nature." op. cit., p.223; cf. Christian Faith, p.460.

75. As Schleiermacher puts it: "For in His suffering unto death, occasioned by His steadfastness, there is manifested to us an absolutely self-denying love; and in this there is represented to us with perfect vividness the way in which God was in Him to reconcile the world to Himself, just as it is in His suffering that we feel most perfectly how imperturbable was His

Now, turning to what Schleiermacher calls the "active obedience" of Christ, we come to understand and view His living relationship with us as His high-priestly office. "It is His action alone," Schleiermacher says, "which completely corresponds to the divine will, and gives pure and full expression to the domiⁿⁱon of the God-consciousness in human nature---this is the basis of our relationship to Him."⁷⁷ As to His priestly office, it is Cross ^{who} points out that "Christ is the climax of all priesthood because he exhausts its significance, and he is the end of all priesthood because he is the perfect mediator between God and the human race for all time."⁷⁸ Yet His whole redeeming activity is manifested in the entire communion of believers in such a way that His priesthood passes over to them, and they in turn are to the rest of mankind as the Jewish priesthood was toward its people.

The origin of this living union with Christ lies in Christ's prophetic office. Christ is the climax and end of all prophecy as well as all priesthood: this fact in turn leads to something of the complete adequacy and the utter inexhaustibility of the original divine revelation. Schleiermacher shows that "no presentation of our relationship to God can arise outside the sphere in which Christ is recognized, which would not fall

blessedness." He goes on: "Hence it may be said that the conviction both of His holiness and of His blessedness always comes to us primarily as we lose ourselves in the thought of His suffering." Christian Faith, pp.458f.

76. Since there is "a natural connexion of punishment with moral evil." Ibid., pp.456ff.

77. Christian Faith, p.454. This relationship with Christ, or this "union with Him, accordingly, although it never attains more than relative manifestation, is yet recognized by God as absolute and eternal, and is affirmed as such in our faith." Ibid., p.455. Thus this union is ever incomplete from our viewpoint, for he says that "in living fellowship with Christ no one wishes to be anything. Each one wishes to appear only as animated by Christ, and as a part of His work which is still in process of development." Ibid., p.454.

78. The Theology of Schleiermacher, p.224; cf. Christian Faith, pp.465f.

short of that revelation."⁷⁹ The revelation of God in Christ is actually His "proclamation as well as His "self-presentation," both together being addressed to men "in view of their opposition to Christ, in order to make them susceptible of union with Him."⁸⁰ We may note from all this that Schleiermacher's doctrinal sources are quite independent of the old Jewish law. From this point of view the prediction of Messianic prophecy is uncertain: "But its essence consists in this, that it spoke of the future of God's true messenger. The idea of that messenger could be grasped by individuals only in limited fashion, by each in his own way; but rightly understood it always involved the end of those two Jewish conceptions of retribution and election."⁸¹

The performance of Christ's miracles is superfluous to our faith, since their characteristically immediate impressiveness is lost in time and space.⁸² In reality, Christ Himself is the "total spiritual miracle"; it is Christ who completes the possibility of the work of redemption and who is, once again, the climax and end of the miraculous activity.⁸³ Since all religious or redemptive activities are referred back to Him who is at once the climax and the end of them all, He is representing the highest point of realization of all things and the acme of their true significance. He is their width and their depth, their real value and the true significance of their development.

Who is He then? Schleiermacher here is not hesitant to testify to His lordship over the religious community⁸⁴ He founded

79. Christian Faith, p.445.

80. Ibid., p.455; cf. Pfleiderer, op. cit., p.116, and Lichtenberger, op. cit., p.85.

81. Christian Faith, p.446.

82. Ibid., pp.448f.

83. Loc. cit.

84. Schleiermacher writes: "The evangelical Church, which is guided and governed by its founder, Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God. He is the quickening centre of the Church; from Him comes all, to Him all returns: He is Beginning and End; in Him we believe, and through Him alone we are blessed." Rowan, op. cit., II. p.207.

for, since "no one enters this community except by submitting himself to Christ's lordship, it follows that Christ Himself initiated this Kingdom, and is thus without any predecessor in His kingly dignity."⁸⁵ True and real lordship⁸⁶ is found only in Him: He is the only Source of spiritual power and grace, all other leaders and sovereigns (including religious and political authorities) being but His inferior shadows or imitations,⁸⁷ Therefore, Christianity has a very distinctive spiritual determination and should be altogether independent of all extrinsic influence or colouring which would tend to channel its development into alien determinative structures. For example, Christianity cannot and must not become a theocracy or a political tool.⁸⁸ The healthy existence of such a religious communion depends solely upon the redemptive causality, i.e., the absolutely powerful God-consciousness of the Founder of this communion; and all human elements which attempt to usurp His lordship must be excluded.

Finally, Schleiermacher discusses Christ's resurrection, ascension, and return to judgment. His attitude in this regard is revolutionary in relation to the intended meanings of the Scriptural presentation. One must be reminded that since Schleiermacher holds redemption to be a continuation of human

85. Christian Faith, p.467; cf. p.466.

86. "The lordship of Christ is as unlimited as that of the animating principle always is when it is neither outwardly hindered nor inwardly weakened." Ibid., p.466.

87. Ibid., p.472.

88. Loc. cit., cf. "That is why Christianity is neither a political religion nor a religious state nor a theocracy." He goes on and affirms this: "To both, then, political religions as well as theocracies, Christ puts an end through the purely spiritual lordship of His God-consciousness; and the stronger and the more extensive His Kingdom becomes, the more definite becomes the severance between Church and State, so that in the proper outward separation---which, of course, may take very different forms---their agreement is ever more perfectly worked out." Ibid., p.473.

development, and that since he now comes to discuss certain matters which do not fit into his theory and therefore are immediately recognizable as alien to his system, we now face what amounts to a real breach in any uniform historical development. Schleiermacher sees the three themes referred to above as fantastic, very likely fictitious, and subject to a plethora of suggestive and erroneous misrepresentations. Still, he does concede that the resurrection, ascension and judgment are accepted only "because they are found in the Scriptures;⁸⁹ and all that can be required of any Protestant Christian is that he shall believe them in so far as they seem to him to be adequately attested."⁹⁰ The resurrection and ascension serve to exalt the "incomparable dignity of Christ,"⁹¹ and "the promise of return is only an accidental form for the satisfaction of the longing to be united with Christ."⁹² However, the miraculous dimension in Christ's Return cannot be made out to depend on His divinity, any more than that which is incomprehensible and miraculous in the ascension can be made dependent on it. Yet the dimension reveals itself as the impulse to all Christ's free actions (although the ascension is nowhere presented as precisely His act).⁹³

Schleiermacher's viewpoint concerning these issues closely parallels what he has to say in counteracting the old sensuous, fragmentary interpretation of the Wundentheologie. We are reminded that faith in Jesus as Redeemer does not rest on details,

89. As to his attitude toward Scripture, in regarding to Christ, Schleiermacher writes: "The Holy Scriptures are the permanent reflection of his prophetic activity, inasmuch as in their composition and preservation, regarded as the work of the Church, they form the most direct exhibition of Christ." Ibid., p.590.

90. Ibid., p.420.

91. Ibid., p.418.

92. Ibid., p.419.

93. Loc. cit.

but rather evolves from a total impression---"from which it follows only that there are no details in existence which could have prevented that impression."⁹⁴ Yet the Christian proclamation strikes out from the activities of Christ's total historical career; it is not merely a matter of externalizing one's own sensuous experience,⁹⁵ even though the significance of Christ's life lies in the impression He made and the influence⁹⁶ He had upon those who believed in Him.⁹⁷

Thus, Christ is the center of Christendom. He is the originator of the Christian consciousness and the Founder of the Christian communion. If we view the whole matter from a relative standpoint, as Schleiermacher did, Christ actually appears as an exalted Figure. If, on the other hand, we see things from the vantage point of faith or revelation, Schleiermacher has in reality downgraded Christ; for His living wholly divine personality is absent from Schleiermacher's total presentation. His chief mistake throughout is that he does not make adequate

94. Ibid., p.423.

95. He preaches: "The resurrection life of our Lord, as the apostle presents it to us, is a glorious, though it may be unattainable, model of the new life in which we are all to walk through Him." Nicoll, Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher, p.267. Again: the coming back of the Saviour to judgment, "already in course of being fulfilled; but it will be only the smallest number of you who will be readily inclined to do so. It always seems to us as if the Lord had not yet set up His judgment-seat; and although we distinctly know that the kingdom of God comes not with outward show, yet as respects the judgment of God we are accustomed to expect that it will so come." Ibid., p.432.

96. Christ's influence is just this: The communication, provided only that "they trace every approximation to blessedness back to Christ, and seek to find it in a fellowship which makes it a principle that, for redemption, nothing need be sought beyond His influence, and also that nothing in that influence is to be neglected." Christian Faith, p.361.

97. Pfeleiderer summarizes the whole discussion: "Schleiermacher thus makes evidently the well-known distinction between the ideal principle which was revealed in Jesus and the form the principle takes as a historical phenomenon. In the communication

allowance for the concept of revelation. Instead, it is permeated and coloured by the background of the modern movement which has been furnished by "the uninspired Rationalism of the Aufklärung."⁹⁸ Yet, we see also how Schleiermacher entangles himself and his system in contradictions when he comes to formulate his thinking about the living Redeemer. Selbie charges his Christology with being "largely a priori and determined by his general interpretation of Christianity,"⁹⁹ without always being wholly consistent with the remainder of his theology. It is the usual practice to charge Schleiermacher thus,

Because his doctrine of the Person of Christ cannot be said to square with the presuppositions of his philosophical theology. But the truth rather is that while some parts of his system are almost too exclusively dominated by his experimental doctrine to its logical conclusions.
100.

Finally, despite all these defects in Schleiermacher's presentation of Christ, Selbie assures us that: "it is still true to say of Schleiermacher that 'he was the first modern theologian to write a definition of Christianity in which the name of its Founder occupies the central place.'"¹⁰¹

of the principle itself consists the work of Christ: His work as Saviour is that of imparting to others the strength of his consciousness of God; his work as Reconciler is the communication of the happiness of this consciousness; effects which were at first the immediate work of Christ, but subsequently could only be produced by the continued operation of his spirit and example in the mind of believers." op. cit., p.117.

98. Mackintosh, The Person of Jesus Christ, p.249.

99. Schleiermacher, p.138.

100. Ibid., p.114.

101. Ibid., p.260.

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH

(Ecclesiology or Pneumatology)

In beginning this chapter it is important to point out that, according to Schleiermacher, fellowship essentially belongs to human nature:

Fellowship...is demanded by the 'consciousness of kind' [Gattungsbewusstsein] which dwells in every man, and which finds its satisfaction only when he steps forth beyond the limits of his own personality and takes up the facts of other personalities into his own. It is accomplished through the fact that everything inward becomes, at a certain point of its strength or maturity, an outward too, and, as such perceptible to others.¹

The internal religious self-consciousness is that original endowment which, arising from the original perfection demands external expression.² The foundation of the religious fellowship is implicitly grounded upon one's broadening from a personal self-consciousness (persönliches Selbstbewusstsein) into a race-consciousness (Gattungsbewusstsein). This is to say that there is an impulse to communicate to others the same religious consciousness. Fellowship is also vitally important for the self-recognition of every individual; it truly reflects the existence of the individual himself. Human communication evokes the true apprehension of human nature. Schleiermacher wrote:

'The dawning of an archetypal idea' in an individual soul, even if it cannot be explained by the previous states of that very soul, can certainly be explained by the total state of the society to which the individual belongs: so even the men who are credited with divine descent always appear as determined by the character of their people, and thus it is from the total energy of the people that their existence is to be explained or comprehended.³

1. Christian Faith, p.27.

2. Ibid., p.246.

According to him, every individual is rooted in certain common religious characteristics; and the experience of each individual is found, more or less, to show the same direction of religious development, not only having identical standing in the Universe but also advancing toward the same goal. The religious communion is formed on the basis of the religion which all possess.⁴ In other words, religion naturally produces religious communion. If we trace back Schleiermacher's earlier thought in this respect, we find that he wrote: "If there is religion at all, it must be social, for that is the nature of man, and it is quite peculiarly the nature of religion."⁵ As Oman points out that when a religious man is in touch with the Infinite, he feels deeply the need of a confederate fellowship with others: "Man is not free merely as he is self-contained. He reaches the freedom of a large individuality only in relation to humanity and the Infinite."⁶ Or, as Mackintosh understands it: "Schleiermacher struck the note

3. Ibid., p.51. cf. Friess, "What ethics seeks to portray should 'be regarded as a complete whole, the parts of which can be understood only in and through the whole.'" op. cit., p.132.

4. Schleiermacher says: "Everybody must in his own experience be conscious of this process from both its sides, the expressing and the perceiving, and must thus confess that he always finds himself, with the concurrence of his conscience, involved in a multifarious communion of feeling, as a condition quite in conformity with his nature, and therefore that he would have co-operated in the founding of such a communion if it had not been there already." Christian Faith, p.27.

5. Speeches, p.148. He also says: "You must confess that when an individual has produced and wrought out something in his own mind, it is morbid and in the highest degree unnatural to wish to reserve it to himself. He should express it in the indispensable fellowship and mutual dependence of action. And there is also a spiritual nature which he has in common with the rest of his species which demands that he express and communicate all that is in him. The more violently he is moved and the more deeply he is impressed, the stronger that social impulse works." Loc. cit.

6. The Problem of Faith & Freedom, p.212.

firmly that to be a Christian is to be a member of a living organism, whose life derives from Christ. The mutual giving and receiving of the brethren makes religion, as lived at the Christian level, what it is."⁷ Thus, owing to the living experience of the religious individual, religion is essentially active or communicative, according to Schleiermacher's own words: "We commence with religion as a kind of activity. Activity is twofold, having to do with life and with art."⁸ Oman also comments at this point that "it was his high merit to have maintained the social nature of religion and the knowledge of divine things in life and not apart from it."⁹

Thus far, considering what has been discussed, Schleiermacher too easily works out his theory of religious communion. Human nature is fundamentally religious; religion is fundamentally social; and sociability essentially belongs to human nature. Schleiermacher is conscious that truth constantly remains the same and that it is easily always identified. In what follows we shall see how he applies this already established theory of the social spirit of the religious communion¹⁰ to an interpretation of the common spirit of the Christian Church.¹¹

What is this religious communion? Selbie points out that "this communion is the Church, the new organism which Christ has formed for Himself. It is in and through the Church that men have experience not merely of the historical image of Christ,

7. Types of Modern Theology, p.73.

8. Speeches, pp.27f.

9. Ibid., p.xlv.

10. Baillie, "Since religion is also for Schleiermacher an essentially social phenomenon, this feeling is always conceived by him as being socially determined." op. cit., p.53.

11. Church means "the totality of the religious affections which form the foundation of such a communion and are recognized to be identical in the various members, in its peculiar content as set forth by contemplation and reflection upon the religious emotions." Christian Faith, pp.29f.

but of His redeeming power. There is a new life in the Church which spreads among all those who enter into touch with it, and the source of this new life is Christ."¹² As to the relationship of the Church to Christ, he says that "the Church is called the body of Christ, ruled by the Head [Eph.1:22-23; Col.1:18-19] and the more it becomes externally complete and inwardly perfect, the more it is also said to become the image of Christ."¹³ Therefore, judging from the passage quoted, it is the aim of the Church to approximate¹⁴ itself to the image of Christ. Christ is the abiding example of the believers: the Christian communion¹⁵ owes ~~to~~ its existence to the appearance of Christ, who is of supernatural origin, manifested in that which is natural. Cross points out here that "in relation to the Redeemer Himself the existence of this new collective life is no miracle but the normal working of that supernatural power in its assumption of natural ethical forms and in its appropriation to itself of the material surrounding it."¹⁶ And again:

We perceive, then, that the law of self-organization, as it appears in the naturalization of the supernatural in Christ, finds its parallel in the communion founded by Him. For the incarnation of Christ in relation to human nature in general corresponds to the regeneration of the individual in relation to the whole nature of the individual; so also to sanctification, as the progressive

12. Selbie, op. cit., p.169.

13. Christian Faith, p.580.

14. "The self-identity of the Christian Church, however, can cover no more than the fact that the mode in which the divine exists in the human ever remains the same, and that the goal also remains the same to which the Church throughout all its movements is seeking to approximate. In Christ also the union of the divine with the human was ever the same." Ibid., p.583.

15. "The Church exists wherever there is faith, because faith is the complete appropriation of Christ and is, in addition, of an essentially fellowship-forming character." Ibid., p.694.

16. The Theology of Schleiermacher, p.198.

appropriation by Christ of individual functions, corresponds the work of the Christian communion as an organic body which progressively organizes itself and appropriates to itself the mass (i.e., the world) which lies over against it.¹⁷

According to Schleiermacher, the work of Christ is but an unfinished task;¹⁸ and the Church was founded by Him to witness to Him in the world¹⁹ and to continue His activities, so that His redemptive work of world-forming will gradually and progressively be actualized through the agency of the Church, acting for Him in the world.²⁰ Therefore, faith in Christ means to live for Christ. "To believe in Christ and to have Christ living in one are the same thing."²¹ Since Christian piety is teleological, faith means to be receptive of Christ as presented by the Church on the one hand, and to be active in human life as manifested in the world on the other. He explained that:

When Christ was with them [Christians], and just because they were taken up into living fellowship with Him, they had the principle of the new life, and had it not merely as susceptibility but also as spontaneous activity; although as long as Christ was with them it took the form exclusively of a continuous desire to receive from Him, and therefore only afterwards could become truly common and manifest itself as Holy Spirit.²²

He continues: "It may be said on the one hand that the Holy

17. *Ibid.*, pp.238f; cf. *Christian Faith*, p.526.

18. Schleiermacher preached on Good Friday: "Oh, that we might all die with the same sorrow over unaccomplished deeds, which was so plainly revealed in the Saviour's sorrowful cry, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'" He continues: "He loves His duty with His whole heart; the thought of the great work to which He had devoted His life still filled His soul. And when He reflected how far that work still was from completion." Nicoll, *op. cit.*, pp.54f.

19. *Christian Faith*, pp.586, 588.

20. *Ibid.*, pp.486, 494.

21. *Ibid.*, p.577.

22. *Ibid.*, p.569.

Spirit produces faith, and on the other hand that the Holy Spirit comes through faith."²³ According to him, the common spirit of the Christian fellowship is the Holy Spirit;²⁴ the Spirit of God belongs to the original nature of man,²⁵ and it is first seen in Christ.²⁶ Schleiermacher also means that through the reciprocal influence of Christians, the existence of a common spirit among them is effected.²⁷ It is this spirit which furnishes a truly unitary life; it is a moral Person.²⁸ He says: "This comon spirit is also one, because in all derived from one and the same source, namely Christ."²⁹ In other words, the reciprocal influence³⁰ of Christian believers is only a process whereby this spirit originally derived from Christ is realized. Yet one will not easily ignore the fact that Schleiermacher is actually applying here the same old theory of his

23. Ibid., p.577.

24. He stated that "the expression 'Holy Spirit' must be understood to mean the vital unity of the Christian fellowship as a moral personality; and this, since everything strictly legal has already been excluded, we might denote by the phrase, its common spirit." Ibid., p.535.

25. He preached that the Spirit of God belongs to "the original nature of man, who was created in the image of God." Nicoll, op. cit., p.100.

26. Pfleiderer traced back that it is the "stronger (higher) consciousness of God, proceeding from Christ, which, as the consciousness of the Christian community, is the 'holy Spirit.' As the God-consciousness of Christ is the divine in Him, so the holy Spirit 'is the union of Divine Being with human nature in the form of the common spirit of the community, as animating the collective life of believers.' The holy Spirit, therefore, is the same saving principle in the community that primarily appeared in the person of Jesus in the form of an individual life; and the saving work of this principle is the production, in those individuals who open themselves receptively to it, of a life of invigorated and felicitated God-consciousness similar to that which was typically present in Jesus." op. cit., pp.117f.

27. Christian Faith, pp.560ff.

28. Ibid., pp.95, 562.

29. Ibid., p.563.

30. cf. Nicoll, op. cit., pp.241f.; Friess, op. cit., p.56.

racial consciousness which is developed from a self-consciousness.³¹ According to him, the self-consciousness of a single individual, in the fullest sense of the word, is to be understood as a widened form of this race-consciousness. As Mackintosh explained: "The consciousness of man, within Christianity as without, includes a communal element. It is a consciousness in which we know ourselves one with others." And he pointed out: "This emphasis on the corporate nature of the Christian life is one of his best contributions."³² One will, then venture to ask in this respect: what is the difference between the self-consciousness and the God-consciousness? Or between the race-consciousness and the common spirit herein discussed? Yet Schleiermacher aware of this, identifies them: "The race is one in the same sense as the Church is one, and as these cannot be two living unities for the same whole, what we wish to denote by the expression 'Holy Spirit' would be exactly the same thing as the racial consciousness."³³ But the difficulty still exists, in spite of his mediating these two ideas by identifying them. It is the appearing of Christ which once again would seem superfluous in this respect, if the self-consciousness can work out into a race-consciousness; and again, as he says, the Holy Spirit would be the same as the race-consciousness. This immediately means that one's self-consciousness can work out the Holy Spirit. However, Schleiermacher is aware of this difficulty, affirming that:

Of course it was first through Christ...that the racial consciousness, along with the God-consciousness and with the same object in view, has become a powerful practical motive. But just for this reason, this power is no mere

31. Edward (speaking for Schleiermacher); "In Christ, then, we see the Spirit, according to the kind and manner of our earth, primordially take the form of self-consciousness in the individual." Christmas Eve, p.61.

32. Types of Modern Theology, p.61.

33. Christian Faith, p.564.

natural principle that would have developed of itself out of human nature as human nature would have remained without Christ.³⁴

Christ being the author of all Christian experience, the Christian communion is a divine operation. Its common spirit is the Spirit of Christ which constitutes the will of the kingdom of God.³⁵ Schleiermacher stated that:

To regard our corporate life as divinely-created, and to derive it from Christ as a divinely-given One, are the same thing; just so, at that time, to believe that Jesus was the Christ, and to believe that the kingdom of God (that is, the new corporate life which was to be created by God) had come, were the same thing. Consequently, all developing blessedness had its ground in this corporate life.³⁶

The Church is the divine government of the world: it is not only the communion of the Christian believers but also a locus of the communication between the human and the divine.³⁷ This is known as the work of redemption, for he writes: "Redemption is possible only in the form of a common life, and sin has its basis, strictly speaking, not in this common life, but only in the individual, in so far as he still has some thing in him of the old common life of sin."³⁸ Thus human fellowship is a necessary process for redemption, and the true force of unification is the Holy Spirit, which is apprehended (as in the form of the common life with Christ) that they may advance harmoniously in the course of development, that the true unity of the

34. Ibid., pp.564f.

35. Schleiermacher preached: "The Kingdom of God, in this narrower sense, is only in those who are actuated by a spirit common to them all, making known the will of God in their hearts. Those manifold gifts, which always work in harmony towards the same end, because they proceed from the same Spirit." Nicoll, op. cit., p.86.

36. Christian Faith, p.360.

37. Selbie, op. cit., p.207.

38. Christian Faith, p.515.

human race may eventually be accomplished through the communication of the Holy Spirit,³⁹ and that their faith in Christ may be mutually established through the reciprocal influence of their spiritual experience. This is rooted in their common inner impulse felt by all the members of the communion to realize their God-consciousness. At this point, Selbie also points out that "union with God in Christ is characteristic of all those who are in the condition of sanctification. The sphere of this union is the Church, and the indwelling of the divine in the Church is conditioned by the indwelling of the divine in Christ."⁴⁰

Schleiermacher gradually realizes the importance of the existence of the Church, but he asserts its extraordinary significance or peculiar worth at the expense of nearly abandoning his affirmation of the abiding virtue of the human race-consciousness, to the extent that the operations of the Holy Spirit are only to be found in the Christian Church.⁴¹ With regard to the Christian life, here is his interpretation of prayer: "Prayer is the sense of need put in relation to our consciousness of God and directed towards the future."⁴² True prayer always relates to an interest in the Kingdom of God, and it originates from the common consciousness of the imperfection of the Church.⁴³ As he puts it: "prayer, i.e. the inner combination

39. Schleiermacher says: "Owing to the identity of the Spirit in all, everything that happened would show a spontaneous consistency; there would exist no difference between the general will and that of individuals." *Ibid.*, p.660.

40. Schleiermacher, p.205.

41. He says: "First, these powers are not to be found outside of the Christian Church, and hence they neither arise from the general constitution of human nature (which would make Christ superfluous) nor from any other divine arrangement. Second, this Spirit is not something supernatural and mysterious though not immediately divine, a higher yet created essence putting itself in secret ways into relation with men." Christian Faith, pp.570f.

42. Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, p.92.

43. Christian Faith, pp.68f.

with the God-consciousness of a wish for full success,"⁴⁴ This involves only two kinds of attitudes: thankfulness and resignation.⁴⁵ Mackintosh pointed out that "nothing betrays a man's genuine standpoint in theology more unerringly than his view of prayer."⁴⁶ Baptism is the act of receiving the individual into the fellowship of believers; the Lord's Supper is an act whereby "the communion of life with Christ is preserved in a particularly energetic manner."⁴⁷

Schleiermacher goes on to discuss the Church Visible and the Church Invisible. It is because the pure appears in impure expression that he proposes the ideas of the Visible and the Invisible. As he puts it: "The invisible Church is the totality of the effects of the Spirit as a connected whole; but these effects, as connected with those lingering influences of the collective life that has been taken possession of by the divine Spirit, constitute the visible Church."⁴⁸ This separation into Visible and Invisible is inevitable because of the antithesis between the Church and the world; yet they are not spatial or externally separate, and this antithesis has been relegated to, or developed into, an antithesis between the Visible and the Invisible Church.⁴⁹ As he wrote: "Every existing church is only a visible appendage of the true church."⁵⁰ By the true Church, he means the invisible one, which is an undivided unity and infallible in action.⁵¹ On the other hand, the visible church is imperfect and subject to division,⁵² although this does not destroy its living fellowship. In fact, this is how he states it:

44. Ibid., p.669.

45. Loc. cit.

46. Types of Modern Theology, p.92.

47. Lichtenberger, op. cit., p.157.

48. Christian Faith, p.677.

49. Ibid., p.676.

50. Speeches, p.205.

51. Christian Faith, p.678.

"All action within the fellowship is productive of fellowship, which can only continue to exist through actions bearing upon it; thus whatever disturbs such action must carry with it division."⁵³ On the other hand, Schleiermacher has already affirmed in the Speeches: "But religion, exactly by its multiplicity, assumes the utmost unity of the church. The multiplicity is necessary for the complete manifestation of religion."⁵⁴ He concluded that it was because "the religion of religions cannot collect material enough for its pure interest in all things human."⁵⁵ The Christian Church, like every historical phenomenon, is a thing subject to the law of development, and therefore it presents variations; and he continues: "It must... be shown how the unity of its essence is, nevertheless, not endangered by these mutations."⁵⁶ At this point, Selbie wrote: "Schleiermacher sees clearly that uniformity is not unity. The true Church is a fellowship, and fellowship is a fellowship of differences. But underlying them all is that oneness of aim and spirit which will always characterize those who are truly Christian in their outlook."⁵⁷ In this aspect, his words take on a severe tone: "As nothing is more irreligious than to demand general uniformity in mankind, so nothing is more unchristian than to seek uniformity in religion."⁵⁸

Thus Schleiermacher, with this view, sees Christian fellowship as being manifested in one spirit which is common to

52. "The church can never in actuality be completely and uniformly one. The only reason, however, is that every society existing in space and time is thereby limited and losing in depth what it gains in breadth, falls to pieces." Speeches, p.213.

53. Christian Faith, p.681.

54. Speeches, p.213.

55. Ibid., p.252.

56. Brief Outline of the Study of Theology, p.110.

57. Schleiermacher, p.67.

58. Speeches, p.252.

all its members as a principle of unity, and which is meanwhile expressed in the differences of that multiplicity which is native to all worldly elements (though not as a necessary evil, but as an essential manifestation).⁵⁹ He goes on to state that this Christian fellowship, through combined effort and with an impulse of mission,⁶⁰ has a goal to pursue: i.e., to regenerate the human race. This means that the kingdom of God must be extended among those who are not yet consciously within it.⁶¹ To quote him: "If a religious view become clear to him, or a pious feeling stir his soul, it is rather his first endeavour to direct others to the same subject and if possible transmit the impulse."⁶² But it is of the utmost importance that the first awakening of the innate religious capacity be realized, for this capacity depends on others to help quicken it.⁶³

Although Schleiermacher, at a later period in his theological thought, appeared to have more of an objective approach, he continued to emphasize the significance of the common consciousness of Christian believers. With regard to the work of regeneration or the process of propagation, however, his basic viewpoint from the beginning was that religion must be one's very own; and his emphasis upon the subjective individual experience was never diminished. Schleiermacher insists that the

59. Schleiermacher dialectically states: "If the fellowship of believers, as an historical body within the human race, is to exist and persist in continuous activity, it must unite in itself two things---a self-identical element, whereby it remains the same amid change, and a mutable element, in which the identity finds expression." Christian Faith, p.582.

60. "Fellowship with Him [Christ] is always a fellowship with His mission to the world." Ibid., p.517.

61. He says: "You see that this is not a case of endeavouring to make others like ourselves, not of believing that what is in one man is indispensable for all. It is only the endeavour to become conscious of and to exhibit the true relation of our own life to the common nature of man." Speeches, p.149.

62. Loc. cit.

63. Oman, The Problem of Faith & Freedom, p.224.

experience must be that of the individual. First, concerning the work of regeneration, he speaks of "the regeneration of the human race, which to be sure only actually comes to pass in the form of regeneration of individuals."⁶⁴ Then, concerning the process of propagation in Christian preaching: "Such preaching must always take the form of testimony; testimony as to one's own experience, which shall arouse in others the desire to have the same experience."⁶⁵ Thus, Schleiermacher strikes a balance by seeing the importance of the subjective individual experience in religion, as active on both the receptive side and the imparting side, and at the same time seeing the significance of the objective communal spirit which is essentially common to all who have been received into the living fellowship with Christ as "co-operative and interactive" (zusammenwirkende und aufeinanderwirkende). Therefore the regeneration is for the individual and the sanctification is mostly communal.⁶⁶ In the redemptive work of furthering the whole, regeneration is for the originating stage and sanctification is for its continuation. Through these two forms taken up into the system of redemption, the Christian fellowship is truly on its way to the goal of world-forming. And the world stands in an antithetical relation to it as the locus in which the missionary work of this fellowship is to be done. As he says: "The world of nature is not to

64. Christian Faith, p.477.

65. Ibid., p.69.

66. He explained: "For the incarnation of Christ means for human nature in general what regeneration is for the individual [Einzelnen]. And just as sanctification is the progressive dominion of the various [einzelnen] functions, coming with time to consist less and less of fragmentary details and more and more to be a whole, with all its parts integrally connected and lending mutual support, so too the fellowship organizes itself here also out of the separate [einzelnen] redemptive activities and becomes more and more co-operative and interactive." Ibid., p.528.

be considered as going its own way on the strength of the divine preservation, the divine government only exerting influence on it through special isolated acts, so as to bring it into harmony with the kingdom of grace."⁶⁷ The world serves as preparatory ground for the development of the Church: its co-existence with the Church is only temporary and contingent. As Schleiermacher puts it: "In the doctrine of the Church in its co-existence with the world, we can only state first those chief activities through the continuous exercise of which the temporal development of this whole really becomes the development of the Christian Church, and which thus form its essential and invariable features."⁶⁸ And yet, he says, "the world might persist alongside of the Church, opposing the Church's action and throw it back upon itself. But yet the Church, as actually existing, would none the less be without any worldly admixture; the two would be entirely separate and mutually exclusive societies."⁶⁹ In describing the existence of this antithesis between the Church and the world with relation to the mission of the Church, the world is but a "nullity and a purely negative thing" (Nichtigkeit und das bloss Verneinende) except for its feeling of a need for help;⁷⁰ and this antithesis is destined to disappear⁷¹ through the absorption of the ultimate world-forming

67. Ibid., p.723.

68. Ibid., p.585. cf. Friess, "He was convinced that a general survey of human history as a whole is indispensable to the Kirchenfürst, since the development of churches and religions can be understood only in connection with the development of all mankind." op. cit., p.158; cf. p.76.

69. Christian Faith, p.676.

70. Ibid., p.582. cf. "The world can be viewed as a perfect revelation of divine wisdom only in proportion as the Holy Spirit makes itself felt through the Christian Church as the ultimate world-shaping power." Ibid., p.737.

71. Ibid., pp.583f.

power of the Christian Church. This means, also that all other religious or obscured human fellowships are destined to pass.⁷² The only true fellowship⁷³ is in the essence of Christianity, which Schleiermacher believes is the only genuine union of the human race. "All other religious fellowships are destined to lose themselves in Christianity, and hence all nations are destined to pass over into the Christian fellowship, the common spirit of the Christian Church would then be the common spirit of the human race."⁷⁴ But here a serious dilemma is involved. As Selbie points out: "For it must be remembered that there is an aptitude for religion in all men, and this justifies the otherwise apparently fruitless efforts of the Church. But it means also that the Church becomes less useful to men the further they advance in the religious life."⁷⁵ His only effective means of bypassing this difficulty is to affirm that the religious condition in the Christian Church is never absolutely perfect, but is ever involved in the conflict with the world; so that, realistically speaking, the Church militant is the Church of which Schleiermacher actually speaks: the Church triumphant is but imaginary. Schleiermacher falls into a dilemma only if this is viewed singularly from the idealistic side of it.

What about the consummation of the Church? As to his concept of immortality, Schleiermacher reminds us that it surely involves difficulties in thought and that here, once again, his

72. Nicoll, *op. cit.*, pp.291, 323f.

73. cf. His prayer: "Let the Spirit of order and of peace rule everywhere in the Christian Church! To this end grant Thy blessing on the bond of love and fellowship which unites Thy people." Nicoll, *op. cit.*, p.233.

74. *Christian Faith*, p.563.

75. *Schleiermacher*, p.62; cf. A.C. McGiffert, "It was inevitable that when religion was regarded as a mere means to morality the more the principle of human ability was emphasized the less need there must seem of religion." *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas*, (New York: The MacMillan company, 1929), p.22.

viewpoint circles back to his concept of the origin of the world. He admits that since one has only analogy by which to work out the expression of a future life, all attempts to develop the ideas of such a life must turn to myths and visions.⁷⁶ As he says: "These were everywhere the forms of prophetic thought, which in its higher import makes no claim to furnish knowledge in the strict sense, but is meant only to give stimulating expression to principles already known."⁷⁷ Thus Schleiermacher is only conscious of the present life,⁷⁸ which truly supplies one with an expression or knowledge of faith. He does not admit of the fantastic notions⁷⁹ which arise from one's own sensuousness⁸⁰ to form any ideas of the future life which is,

76. He warns: "If we seek, by means of the idea of the future life, to assign a place to the consummated Church where it will no longer be a productive factor but a product only, again we fail. The one point of view will always tend to merge in what is mythical, i.e. in the historical presentation of what is supra-historical; the other point of view will always approximate what is visionary, i.e. the earthly presentation of what is more than earthly." Christian Faith, p.722.

77. Loc. cit.

78. Wendland, "Schon das irdische Leben ist eine volle Offenbarung der Herrlichkeit Gottes. Das künftige Leben also nichts prinzipiell Neues mehr geben." op. cit., p.213; cf. pp.216f.

79. In Schleiermacher's letter to Henriette von Willich, what he says about the life hereafter throws some light upon his viewpoint of the problem of immortality: "But if you picture to yourselves a phenomenal life like the present, and conceive that you may, under such circumstances, be distant from your beloved, and that others may be nearer to him---dear daughter, that is an empty phantom, that you must try to get rid of." Rowan, op. cit., II. p.81.

80. He says: "In the religious life then we may well say we have already offered up and disposed of all that is mortal, and that we actually are enjoying immortality. But the immortality that most men imagine and their longing for it, seem to me irreligious, nay quite opposed to spirit of piety. Dislike to the very aim of religion is the ground of their wish to be immortal." He then continues: "They are concerned as to how they are to carry it with them beyond this life, and their utmost endeavour is for longer sight and better limbs." Speeches, p.100.

in reality, beyond one's grasp.⁸¹ (Man, after all, is merely a historical being and can only know, historically, what is intelligible to him.)

Before concluding this chapter it is important to point out that Schleiermacher emphasizes throughout the presence of a living fellowship and an ethical religion⁸² among the believers who are animated by one Spirit in the Christian Church, all of which is in turn due to a true relationship to its Founder, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the Christian Church is "in the world though not of it, and develops itself historically in pursuance of the aims of its Founder."⁸³ As Lücke commented on his work: "Its greatest merit is to be sought in its contents; in this, namely,---that Schleiermacher, from first to last, gives so decided a prominence to the positive character of the Christian system of belief, to its most inward significance and connexion in the life of the Church."⁸⁴

81. He writes: "Certainty beyond this life is not given to us. Do not misunderstand me. I mean certainty for phantasy, which desires to see everything in distinct images; but, otherwise, there is the greatest certainty---and nothing would be certain if it were not so---that for the soul there is no such thing as death, no annihilation. But personal life is not the essence of spiritual being; it is but an outward presentment thereof. How this is repeated we know not---we can form no conception of it; we can only form poetic visions." Rowan, op. cit., II. p.80.

82. Wendland, "Diese Gefühle und Betrachtungen begleiteten auch nicht nur wie heilige musik sein tätiges Leben, sondern gaben dem Handeln die stärksten Impulse." op. cit., p.62.

Also, Schleiermacher preaches: "Faith which is not active by works is no true faith, but dead, and the works that do not come from faith are only dead works." Nicoll, op. cit., p.210.

Dilthey, "Die Kirche ist nichts anderes als die Gemeinschaft der Menschheit, welche in sich die Idee und Aufgabe der Menschheit vermöge des sittlichen Prozesses realisiert." op. cit., p.793.

83. Selbie, op. cit., p.220; cf. Christian Faith, pp.583f.

84. Schleiermacher, Brief Outline of the Study of Theology, (to which are prefixed Reminiscences of Schleiermacher by Friedrich Lücke). p.40.

PART II.

THE CRITIQUE OF SCHLEIERMACHER'S THEOLOGY

BY EMIL BRUNNER AND KARL BARTH

INTRODUCTORY

Schleiermacher's theology is regarded as modern theology. Should this term "modern" be attached as epithet to the word "theology" and applied to Schleiermacher's theology, then "modern theology" in the strictest or the most regular usage of the term, should not only be assigned to Schleiermacher, but Brunner and Barth should equally be defined as modern theologians.¹ The reason for pointing this out is that even Brunner and Barth themselves constantly spoke of "modern Protestantism" as if this term axiomatically referred to a special kind of Christian faith which is, though taken to a large extent for granted, different from their own. Since being a modern man is what the three have in common, as Barth says: "Shall we ask ourselves, how it came, that Schleiermacher could become so much the man of our own---perhaps really still our own---destiny..."² It is worth while taking notice of this. It is Miegge who does not fail to take it into consideration, and in the first instance, describing this seemingly confused situation, he says:

It is a situation that we may enjoy when, although in the realm of Protestantism Barthians and Liberals have for a quarter of a century been exchanging fierce blows in a dual

1. Mackintosh's book is named "Types of Modern Theology," and Barth's name is therein included.

2. Barth: "Fragen wir uns, wie es kam, dass Schleiermacher so sehr der Mann unseres -- vielleicht wirklich auch immer noch unseres Schicksals werden konnte..." Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert. (Ihre Vorgeschichte und ihre Geschichte). Zweite, verbesserte Auflage. (Evangelischer Verlag AG. Zollikon/Zürich, 1952), p.380. This book is referred to as "Die Protestantische Theologie," unless otherwise indicated.

which each imagines to be to the death, a sensitive and cultured theologian can come from the other side with a smile of kindly irony and say: 'And yet at root, you are very much alike: you are all moderns.' 3

In spite of C. Van Til's hasty, superficial and in many respects, erroneous and opprobrious appraisal of Brunner and Barth, the title of his book "The New Modernism," taking it by itself, seems correct. It is important not to neglect this: we must realize that they are all modern men. Berkouwer does not adequately realize that, but partly because he does not, even he is forced to admit a difficulty in the appraisal of Barth's polemic against modern Protestantism. He writes: "It is very difficult, however, adequately to circumscribe Barth's polemic against modern Protestantism because of the undeniable variations within this area."⁴ The writer would like to ask Berkouwer why, if there are so many triumphs of Barth's theology as he claims, there is no triumph over modern Protestantism?

Actually the characteristics of a modern man are: self-consciousness and also consciousness of his contemporaneity. Again, what he has in common with other modern men is that they all belong to the so-called "modern age," i.e., their own age. Naturally they all confess that when they speak, they can only speak for, or take the responsibility for, their own age. Since he is a modern man, even if he were "the captain of his soul" he could not escape the fact that he is also "the child of his age" --- whether he is conscious of it or not. As Brunner says, not unjustly: "Schleiermacher is simply the son of the

3. A Roman Catholic Interpretation of Karl Barth, Scottish Journal of Theology, edited by T.F. Torrance and J.K.S. Reid, VII. 1. March 1954. (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd Ltd), p.59; cf. p.60.

4. Berkouwer, The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, (London: The Paternoster Press, 1956), p.168.

Enlightenment, of its anthropologism!"⁵ Similarly Barth points out that the influence of Schleiermacher's time on Schleiermacher was absorbingly great: "He participated in the cultural consciousness of his time...but not only as a passive participant, as one who is being educated, but [as an active participant, as] one who himself is educator, as the bearer of this cultural consciousness."⁶ Actually one can see that Brunner and Barth are all perfectly aware of this "given" situation of our human existence.

It is rather surprising that about thirty years ago Brunner and Barth⁷ directed themselves seriously and critically to judging Schleiermacher in quite a severe tone. Particularly it must be pointed out that they did not like Schleiermacher as a "Christian" theologian.⁸ This is evident especially in Brunner from the mood of his book Die Mystik und das Wort, where his slashing, sweeping criticism of Schleiermacher is "most formidable."⁹ Even Barth, in the foreword of the first part of the first volume of his Dogmatik, clearly declared the opposition

5. Brunner: "Darin ist Schleiermacher einfach der Sohn der Aufklärung, ihres Anthropologismus!" Die Mystik und das Wort. (Der Gegensatz zwischen moderner Religionsauffassung und christlichem Glauben dargestellt an der Theologie Schleiermachers). Zweite, stark veränderte Auflage. (Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr 'Paul Siebeck') Tübingen, 1928), p.31; cf. p.32. This book is referred to as "Mystik," unless otherwise indicated.

6. Barth: "Ihm ist seine Teilnahme an dem Kulturbewusstsein seiner Zeit...Aber nicht nur seine passive Teilnahme als Gebildeter, sondern seine Teilnahme als selbst Bildender, als Träger dieses Kulturbewusstseins." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.386.

7. Barth says: "I cannot consider Schleiermacher a good teacher in the realm of theology because, so far as I can see, he is disastrously dim-sighted in regard to the fact that man as man is not only in need but beyond all hope of saving himself; that the whole of so-called religion, and not least the Christian religion, shares in this need: and that one cannot speak of God simply by speaking of man in a loud voice." The Word of God and the Word of Man, transl. by Douglas Horton. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1928), pp.195f.

between himself and the line of liberalistic Neo-Protestantism. He says:

In the former undertaking I can only see a readoption of the line Schleiermacher-Ritschl-Herrmann, and because in any thinkable continuation of this line I can only see the plain destruction of Protestant theology and the Protestant Church...[as it exist] self-nourished at its own source, standing upon its own feet, and finally liberated from such secular misery, I can therefore only say No here. 10

Although both Brunner and Barth depicted themselves as in diametrical opposition to Schleiermacher, yet they seem to have been aware of their exaggerated attitude towards him and to have modified it to a certain extent.¹¹ This modification was only fair, for after all, they had studied and learned very much from him and were abundantly inspired by him.¹² It did not mean a shifting of their theological orientation; rather, they had recognized their unnecessary bias against him. Naturally, Barth quoted Schleiermacher to the effect that "he founded not a school, but an era."¹³ Barth's modified attitude

8. In Barth's case, he criticized Schleiermacher not only as a "non-Christian" theologian but both as "Christian" and as "non-Christian."

9. Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, p.31.

10. Barth, The Doctrine of the Word of God, transl. by G. T. Thomson, (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1936), p.x. This book is referred to as CD I/1.

11. Barth: "Schleiermacher ist, in seiner Glaubenslehre für die Dogmatik vor allem, aber auch in seiner Kurzen Darstellung für die Theologie überhaupt und in seinen philosophischen Werken schliesslich für die ganze Wissenschaft gelungen, was vor ihm einem Augustin, einem Thomas, einem Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin in ihrem entsprechenden Werken mit ihrem 'Kapiteln, Artikeln oder Loci nicht gelungen ist, eine einfach bewunderungswürdig durchgeführte Zusammenschau der disiecta membra des historisch-christlichen Glaubens." Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.165.

12. v. Balthasar, Karl Barth Darstellung und Deutung seiner Theologie, (Verlag Jakob Hegner in Köln, MCMLI), pp.210f.

13. Barth: "Nicht eine Schule stiftet er, sondern ein Zeitalter." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.379.

towards Schleiermacher is even more evident where he writes: "However grave the ⁹question one would therefore have to ask, one has unreservedly to take into account that Schleiermacher was yet a Christian theologian."¹⁴ And he added: "He wants to be, under all circumstances, as well as a Christian theologian, a modern man, we should not wish to decide whether (it is) with the same or even with a greater (earnestness), but in any case [it is] with a similar earnestness."¹⁵ In this respect, Brunner, in his book, does not deny that Schleiermacher is really the only great theologian of the century.¹⁶ He acknowledges that Schleiermacher's influence since then has been great; he writes:

The most significant achievement of Schleiermacher is the combination of idealism and humanism with Christian thought; as the pioneer of Christian humanism, he was, above all, influential in the theology of the 19th and 20th centuries. As the only imposing, spiritually powerful representative of that idea, he became the modern theologian, under whose protection and leadership all the others sheltered. ¹⁷

Brunner and Barth first appeared as "corrective" theologians,¹⁸ and are known as belonging to the school of "Theology

14. Barth: "Man muss, wie schwierige Fragen man auch zu stellen habe, ohne Vorbehalt damit rechnen, dass Schleiermacher jedenfalls auch christlicher Theologe gewesen ist." Ibid., p.382.

15. Barth: "Er will unter allen Umständen -- wir dürfen nicht entscheiden wollen, ob mit gleichem oder gar mit grösserem, aber jedenfalls mit ähnlichem Ernst wie christlicher Theologe, so auch moderner Mensch sein." Ibid., p.386.

16. Brunner: "Er, der einzige wirklich grosse Theologe des Jahrhunderts." Mystik, pp.6, 8.

17. Brunner: "Das Bedeutsamste an Schleiermachers Leistung ist die Verbindung jenes Idealismus und Humanismus mit dem christlichen Gedankenkreis; als der Bahnbrecher eines christlichen Humanismus ist er vor allem in der Theologie des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts wirksam gewesen. Als einziger imposanter, geistesmächtiger Darsteller jener Idee ist er der moderne Theologe geworden, unter dessen Schutz und Führung sich die anderen alle stellten." Ibid., p.8.

of Crisis." They engaged themselves polemically against Schleiermacher, in various and numerous places in their writings, sometimes mentioning his name, sometimes not when obviously they are writing with him in view. This task constituted an essential part of their polemic activities and operated through most of their theological labours. They reacted to Schleiermacher's theology as if the task of criticizing it seemed to them a life-and-death struggle. Barth believes that we face "the fact of pietistic-rationalistic modernism," rooted rather deeply not only in the humanist Renaissance but also in medieval mysticism. Barth speaks of to-day's so-called "denial of revelation" as being very irrelevant in light of the fact that, as he sees it, evangelical Christianity opposes Protestant modernism at this and other points only to find itself in conflict with itself.¹⁹

Barth goes on to say that it is not a sort of irrelevant paganism: that, at least, is not its intention; but it meets us, if we take it as it presents itself, as a possibility of faith. By listening to it we do not recognize faith in so full a sense as to decide whether this possibility is not a possibility of simple unbelief.²⁰

But, when the battle was over, the decisive issue was past, and the time came when they settled down to elaborate their own theology, they could not evade the predicament of finding themselves travelling the same road as Schleiermacher, although in a different direction. As Miegge says: "Against neo-Protestantism Barth makes a fundamental objection concerning content: namely concerning its resolution of Christianity

18. Mackintosh: "It is because a widely influential Modernist theology had become indifferent to the Word of God, replacing it by the word of man, that Barth resolved to speak out, to utter his 'warning cry,' to suggest his 'corrective,' to make his 'marginal observation.'" Types of Modern Theology, p.269.

19. CD I/1. p.36.

20. Loc. cit.

into anthropology, against which he takes his own 'Copernican revolution' which replaces an anthropocentric theology by a theocentric one."²¹ It seems very likely that they are developing their own thought in contrast to that which is originally Schleiermacher's²² except that the position has been inverted. One notices with great interest, in this context, von Balthasar's comment that Barth has arrived at much of his own genuinely evangelical content and Weltanschauung by borrowing Schleiermacher's own framework of reference ("The history of theology supplies no other principle of form").²³ By speaking of the thought-form held in common, von Balthasar means the same as that which this present writer describes as the one road which all three travelled on.²⁴ Their different directions of travel are, von Balthasar says, indicative of a difference in thought-content.

If it is really the case, as Barth emphasizes in his view, that Schleiermacher wrote his theology with an apologetic

21. A Roman Catholic Interpretation of Karl Barth, Scottish Journal of Theology, VII. 1. March 1954, p.61. cf. Torrance: "Barth has learned from...the scientific purpose of Schleiermacher, but instead of binding theology to the philosophy of one age he has sought to give theology such an expression in our thought that the living Truth becomes the master of our thinking and not thinking the master of the truth." Karl Barth, The Expository Times, edited by A.W. Hastings and E. Hastings. LXVI. Oct. 1954--Sept. 1955 (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark), p.208.

22. Barth himself admits that the situation to oppose or criticize Schleiermacher is bound to be difficult: "Und es ist wahrlich auch ein Zeichen des aussergewöhnlichen Ausmasses seiner Wirkung, dass erst 1924 von E. Brunner von wirklich anderen, Schleiermacher-freien (wenn auch vielleicht erst relativ Schleiermacher-freien!) Voraussetzungen aus gegen Schleiermacher geschrieben worden ist. Vorher immer nur aus einer solchen sachlich Nähe zu ihm, von der aus eine wirksame Antithese unmöglich war. Kein Mensch kann heute sagen, ob wir ihn wirklich schon überwunden haben, oder ob wir nicht bei allem nun allerdings laut und grundsätzlich gewordenen Protest gegen ihn noch immer im Tiefsten kinder seines Jahrhunderts sind." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.380.

purpose and was busily struggling all the time with the idealist group of his contemporaries,²⁵ then one question must be raised: had Brunner and Barth lived in Schleiermacher's time, would they have had written a Schleiermacherian-type of theology and would Schleiermacher, if he had lived in our time, have written a Brunnerian or Barthian-type of theology? Can this question be answered absolutely in the negative?

That a theologian should be enmeshed in the movements of his age is almost inescapable, when he sets up doctrines in an attempt at theological reconstruction. Barth had virtually no hesitation in acknowledging Schleiermacher to have executed the best theological performance for his age.²⁶ So far as Schleiermacher's historical position is concerned, it can be seen from Barth's article on him in his book Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert that Barth has quite thoroughly sympathized with Schleiermacher for having lived in such an age of intellectual difficulty, and for being surrounded by the group of idealists.

Schleiermacher's theology appears consistently anthropocentric.²⁷ He had early himself written that man is subject,²⁸

23. von Balthasar: "Und da die Theologieggeschichte kein anderes Formprinzip liefert, entlehnt Barth den Rahmen, die Denkform Schleiermachers, um sie mit einem anderen, dem genuin evangelischen Inhalt zu füllen." op. cit., pp.211f.

24. e.g., what Schleiermacher views religion as independent of human knowledge and will is equivalent to Brunner and Barth view theology as an independent science; or the three all hold that God is transcendent, and so on.

25. Die Protestantische Theologie, pp.386f; cf. p.397.

26. Ibid., p.381.

27. Barth: "Ihm war, wie es sich nun herausgestellt hat, der Mensch, das menschliche Selbstbewusstsein, nämlich in seiner Bestimmtheit als frommes Selbstbewusstsein fraglos der zentrale Gegenstand seines theologischen Denkens." Ibid., p.410.

28. Ibid., p.424.

who plays the most important and powerful role in the Universe; man's feeling is the presupposition and ground of all realities in this theology of consciousness.²⁹ Barth's theology is Christocentric.³⁰ As he says: "There are strictly speaking no Christian themes independent of Christology, and the Church must insist on this in its message to the world."³¹ Therefore, Christ is the revelation of God, who is subject, in the whole drama of salvation, and Christ is the core of Christian faith, the centre and content of theological thinking. These opposite emphasis in Schleiermacher's and Barth's thought are everywhere observable in their writings, but Brunner tends to do a little more justice to human reason even at the expense of adopting a wider basis, "Even in the matter of the conversion of Christians Christ has not succeeded," he argues;³² and he believes that no Christian may be said to possess absolute faith when one considers that one cannot argue from a given state of any Christian back to any "absolute" cause. The theology of causality is itself inevitably relativistic. If such thinking as this be carried on empirically, as it must be ultimately, is anyone truly wholly converted? His theology, therefore, may likely involve a greater contradiction; and he may have to pay the price for this scholastic bargaining.

29. Barth: "Schleiermacher hat seine Bewusstseinstheologie nun freilich nicht so, sondern exklusiv subjektiv: ganz und gar als eine historische Darstellung bestimmter, nämlich der christlich frommen Gemütszustände verstanden. Eben sie als solche sind ihm nun aber Realitäten." Die Kirchliche Dogmatik, III/3. (Evang. Verlag AG. Zollikon/Zürich. 1950), p.371. This and the other volumes in German edition will be referred to as KD plus the volume-number and the part-number only, e.g., KD III/3., etc.

30. von Balthasar: "Die Mitte, die Barth einnimmt, ist sachlich bestimmbar als radikale Christozentrik." op. cit., p.46.

31. Barth, Church Dogmatics (E.T.), edited by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark), II/1. p.320; cf. p.513. I/2. p.11. All the other volumes in E.T. will be referred to as CD plus the volume-number and the part-number only, e.g., CD II/1., etc.

Brunner opposes Schleiermacher chiefly in his book Die Mystik und das Wort, which is a massive volume especially devoted to this purpose, and in which he chooses a single point, mysticism, as the object of his criticism. Mysticism's chief devastation, he says, is its destruction of the apprehension of the Word, and its substitution of the "musical" revelation of one's own intoxication with feeling for "the clear, bright revelation of God in the Word."³³ As well as in this book, Brunner criticized Schleiermacher also in the Theology of Crisis, Mediator, Word and world, Erlebnis, Erkenntnis und Glaube, etc., but he does not consider Schleiermacher's sermons, for he thought that they ought not to be used for judging Schleiermacher's theological thought.³⁴ On the other hand, we see that Barth devoted two main articles, one earlier on his book Die Theologie und die Kirche, the other later in the Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert and innumerable passages in his Dogmatik and other writings to the criticism of Schleiermacher, in some passages taking account of the sermons. For Barth thinks that in order to gain a true insight into his theological thought, one cannot afford to miss this remarkable clue from his pulpit utterances.³⁵ Barth believes that a sermon for Schleiermacher

32. The Mediator, (London and Redhill: Lutterworth Press, 1942), p.504.

33. Brunner: "Die furchtbarste Verheerung die die Mystik anrichtet, ist die, dass sie das Verständnis des Wortes zerstört, dass sie die aus dem Gefühlsrausch geborene 'musikalische' Offenbarung an die Stelle der klaren, hellen Offenbarung Gottes im Wort setzt." Mystik, p.6; cf. p.143.

34. Ibid., p.366.

35. Barth: "Man kann nicht ernst genug in Anschlag bringen, dass Schleiermacher keiner von jenen Theologen war, die sich der schwierigsten, der entscheidenden theologischen Situation, der Situation, in der der Theologe in ganzer Ungesicherheit nur als Theologe sich bewähren muss, unter irgend einem Vorwand zu entziehen pflegen. Ich meine die Situation des Mannes auf der Kanzel." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.383.

is essentially the self-communication of the preacher.³⁶

In the critique by Brunner and Barth, there is a large area which they both hold in common, but there is a difference between them of approach or emphasis. The writer would suggest that on the whole, Brunner's approach is more appropriate to the philosophical (younger) Schleiermacher than the semi-theological (mature) one; Barth's is more equally appropriate³⁷ to both the younger and the mature Schleiermacher.³⁸ Because of these two periods of Schleiermacher's development, Barth's critique, it may be as well to point out, cannot take an inflexible or consistently unified form. Throughout the whole article in Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert, one can see how Barth struggles with this situation as he carries on his criticism: "the one---the other:" or "the first motive...the second motive..." etc. Certainly, as Berkouwer says, there are "undeniable variations within this area."³⁹ Apart from the

36. Ibid., p.406.

37. See how Barth recognizes Schleiermacher as a versatile person: "Er ist als moderner Mensch, also als Denker, also als Ethiker, also als Religionsphilosoph, also als philosophischer Theolog, also als Apologet und also endlich als Dogmatiker entschlossen." Ibid., p.397.

38. In this connection, it may be as well to point out that the younger Schleiermacher is very philosophical and this judgment is supported by both his romantic interpretations of religion in the Speeches and his personal ethical views in the Soliloquies. The mature Schleiermacher is theological as well as philosophical. This can be seen in his later work the Christian Faith, in which his theological attempt (with Christian motive) has resulted in his Christology. However, one has to be reminded that Schleiermacher's theology, in this respect, is essentially equivocal; and by no means easy to discover or to discern this difference (between the younger and the mature Schleiermacher) completely. Probably, on the one hand, the philosophical Schleiermacher reserved room for the further development of his interpretation of religion; on the other hand, the semi-theological Schleiermacher seemingly intended to reconcile his later view with his former standpoint. Thus he is seen as an expert reconciler of oppositions or inconsistencies.

39. cf. Supra p.112.

fact that they all are modern men, this difficulty is also due to Schleiermacher's possession of two soteriologies as well as his position in his interpretation of theology. On the one hand, he had both a philosophical soteriology and a semi-theological one; while on the other hand, his position is that he himself is the centre of his peripheral contemplation of human life.⁴⁰

The primary purpose of the present writer is to present a study of Brunner's and Barth's criticism of Schleiermacher with respect not only to "how" but also to "why" the criticism was made. This involves the writer in a serious dilemma. One can easily imagine that the writer is neither Brunner nor Barth, and can only judge their criticism by their writings. The difficulty is this: Suppose there were, or actually are, other theologians whose thought is close to or, in some respects, even the same as that of Schleiermacher's (e.g., Bultmann) --- does Barth write with both Bultmann and Schleiermacher in view? In this direction, let Barth's own words be quoted: "The homogeneity in method of both the Schleiermacher-De Wette and the Bultmann conception should be clearly noted."⁴¹

This part also consists of five chapters, set up to criticize the five chapters in Part I.. Thus, Chapter I is criticized by Chapter VI, Chapter II by Chapter VII and so on. This does not mean to suggest that both Brunner and Barth follow the structure of Schleiermacher's theological thought while criticizing it, as if their thought stands against his thought, their notion against his notion, etc., but rather it is intended to describe in this part the way (how) they criticize him, together with the orientation of their theological thought (why).

40. Die Protestantische Theologie, p.403.

41. CD I/1. p.39. Similarly, Hegel's conception of history, in one way or another, is also involved, and there are many other examples.

CHAPTER VI

THE THEOLOGY OF REVELATION VS.

THE RELIGION OF IMMANENCE

1. Salvation is a movement from above --- --- the self-movement of God.

The most central and decisive criticism of Schleiermacher by Brunner and Barth is that his theology, in essence, is but a "religion of immanence."¹ The contemplation of a soul actually means man himself seeking a way to God. As von Balthasar puts it, according to Barth: "Religion as a 'human a priori' is the original enemy of revelation."² Both Brunner and Barth are most seriously concerned with and state extremely clearly and repeatedly, their belief that the decisive point is that revelation of salvation in its true meaning, is a movement from above.³ Its fundamental concern is to express God's condescension to man.⁴ Brunner begins by referring to the Biblical speech about revelation as God's self-movement or graceful condescension manward, not simply waiting for man to seek Him ^{but} not, but Himself seeking

1. Brunner, The Theology of Crisis, (New York - London: Charles Scribner's sons, 1930), p.5; cf. CD I/2. p.813.

2. von Balthasar: "Religion als ein 'menschliches Apriori' ist der Urfeind der Offenbarung." op. cit., p.97.

3. CD II/1. pp.51, 69; cf. Brunner: "When it (Salvation) comes, comes from beyond, it comes not from but into history, not from but into human reality, which in itself cannot produce but only for it." The Word and the World, (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1931), p.48.

4. CD II/1. p.200; cf. Torrance: "Because it is upon this downward motion of God's grace that the very being of man is grounded. Therefore,...a Christian doctrine of man...is grounded upon the acknowledgment of a Revelation." The Word of God and the Nature of Man, Reformation Old and New, edited by F.W. Camfield (London and Redhill: Lutterworth press, 1947), p.121.

out man; and this manward orientation is, for Brunner, the characteristic element in the Bible and in the entire divine-human intercourse, in which the initiative clearly rests with God.⁵

One of Barth's favourite sentences is: "God stoops down to us."⁶ Camfield also explains that Barth's idea of salvation is the movement of God from above towards man, not the self-movement of man towards God. Man therefore must follow the positive way of revelation by confining himself to the God-to-man movement as witnessed to Jesus Christ in the Scriptures. Man must not then deviate from the direction that the movement is "world-ward" and not of the world.⁷ Similarly, Brunner holds revelation to be a divinely initiated action, and not the initiative of mankind.⁸

A. The Word of God vs. religious experience.

Therefore, with regard to the starting-point of theological method, Barth says that Schleiermacher does not start from revelation, but from religionism. "Schleiermacher tried to find in religion as feeling the essence of theology, revelation being a definite impression which produces a definite feeling and then a definite religion."⁹ Similarly Brunner says that Schleiermacher does not proceed from the Word of God,¹⁰ and he points out "that for Schleiermacher the question about the essence of religion is the fundamental question of theology."¹¹ Here Brunner

5. The Mediator, p.294.

6. CD II/1. pp.527, 546.

7. Revelation and the Holy Spirit, (London: Elliot Stock, 1933), p.19; cf. Reformation Old and New, p.23.

8. Revelation and Reason, (The Christian doctrine of faith and knowledge), transl. by Olive Wyon, (London: Student Christian Movement Press Ltd., 1947), p.32; cf. The Theology of Crisis, p.103; The Mediator, p.488.

9. CD I/2. p.290.

10. Mystik, p.247.

11. "...dass für Schleiermacher die Frage nach dem Wesen der Religion die Grundfrage der Theologie ist." Ibid., p.34.

compares Schleiermacher's interpretation of religion with the religion of the Bible, viewing Schleiermacher's interpretation as falsely placing man's relationship to his own mental processes in paramount position.¹² Barth also emphasizes the importance of what God has spoken to man; he stresses the need of man to serve that Word which has been revealed to us. Does the modernist listen to the Word of God? Does Schleiermacher serve God's Word as a revelation of mystery to us and for us? No! Barth points out that "Schleiermacher does not speak as a responsible servant but like a real virtuoso as a free master of these things."¹³ Barth sees modernism as not being aware of the essential distinctiveness of the proclamation of the Word. Modernism can never really understand that God's Word irremediably opposes and contradicts all human viewpoints, and that man's very theological language must inevitably serve an actual divine utterance. Modernism does not see that man, in the presence of God, has constantly to listen for that Word which is spoken to him, and to await something of which he is not yet aware and may in no event utter unto himself.¹⁴

Schleiermacher's doctrinal work is dissatisfying because it makes no transition in emphasis from teaching to listening, and consequently fails to make proper application of that transcendent Norm which must govern all teaching. We have but a teaching church and its proclamation, and the stress laid upon these is such as to transport everything into the realm of reflexion, philosophical anthropologisms, and dialectical systematization --- through all of which we encounter no criticism or regulation of the human discourse from above. To express all

12. Ibid., p.186.

13. "Schleiermacher redet nicht als verantwortlicher Diener, sondern wie ein rechter Virtuose als ein freier Meister dieser Sache." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.399.

14. CD I/1. p.68.

this in still other terms, Schleiermacher contents himself with the soliloquy of a teaching church rather than with an address made to the Church as such.¹⁵ Such a subjective and immanentist viewpoint cannot provide the proper basis for an understanding of Christian revelation; and, should revelation cease to be taken seriously as a declaration from God, it is downgraded to a mere spectacular discovery on human terms within the human cosmos.¹⁶

What, then, is Schleiermacher's starting-point of theological thought here? Barth criticizes him by saying that "Schleiermacher as a theologian wished only to speak of what was 'the inmost motive of my being,' out of 'an irresistible inner necessity of my nature' (Reden ub. d. Rel. 1799 p.5), 'in order to set up his own idea as an object for the rest' (op. cit. p.182)."¹⁷ For Schleiermacher took it for granted that there is a special province in each soul which is properly endowed for this purpose. Barth, however, is not interested in the possibilities of what man can do for himself. He points out that theologians, as a result of philosophical enlightenment (with reference particularly to the nature and the limitations of theoretical reason) and proceeding from Schleiermacher's delineation of the special "province" proper to religion within the human heart, have turned with considerable interest to certain derivative or auxilliary departments of psychology. Barth himself, however, feels compelled to say "that we can really take no special interest" in any further delineation of so-called "special centres" of either actual or potential religious experience.¹⁸

Brunner here agrees with Barth that Schleiermacher is

15. CD I/2. p.813.

16. Ibid., p.124.

17. CD I/1. p.21.

18. Ibid., p.232.

speaking solely of the inner state of man. "It is that which happens in man when he is religiously excited and he is in the situation of being pious," Brunner asserts, "which constitutes the difference between the more pious men and the less pious."¹⁹ His chief objection to Schleiermacher's theology at this point is the latter's universal sort of soteriology, which seems to argue for a form of religion everywhere capable of being apprehended and described by everyone,²⁰ so that "true" religion merely becomes a ubiquitous and consequently meaningless entity which satisfies no one. Such an amorphous concept can testify only to the fact that the individual should discover, immanent to his own being, the sources of immediate life.²¹

Brunner and Barth criticize Schleiermacher for taking a wrong point of departure, but his emphasis here is actually not completely wrong, if his interpretation of religious experience is determined by the Word of God.²² As Torrance points out: "This capacity for revelation is not to be judged in terms of the receiver, as if he could achieve it on his own, but in terms of the Giver, the Father in Heaven, who acts by His Spirit upon man, from beneath and from within man and issuing out of man's life a really human understanding of revelation and a really human obedience to it."²³ Barth, however, explains that his quarrel is not with such descriptive terms as "experience" or

19. "Sie ist das, was im Menschen vorgeht, wenn er religiös erregt, wenn er im Zustand des Frommseins ist, das, was den Unterschied zwischen dem frömmern und dem weniger frommen Menschen ausmacht." *Mystik*, p.30.

20. *The Philosophy of Religion*, (London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1937), p.48.

21. *Mystik*, p.122.

22. In fact, von Balthasar has even quoted this: "In der 'Antwort' wird Barths Standort klarer. Der 'religiöse Individualismus' ist die grosse 'Entdeckung Schleiermachers'" *op. cit.*, p.221.

23. *The Place of Christology in Biblical and Dogmatic Theology, Essays in Christology for Karl Barth*, edited by T.H.L. Parker, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1956), p.17.

"religious experience," nor even with the very relevant and determinative ingress of the Word of God into the reality of man. The reason he avoids the term is the background connotation that man generally is capable of religious experience of a sort that might assume critical and normative proportions.²⁴

In this respect, Barth affirms that it is the Word of God that must take the initiative, not religious experience; and so the two should not be confused. If men may know the Word of God, he asserts, then they have some experience of it and can be what they are, as that Word determines. The 19th Century term "religious consciousness" ought not be taken to mean that "there is" or that man "has" a religious consciousness; yet we can say that man may have one, or that the Word of God may even become the ground and object of it. What Schleiermacher called "being affected" we would describe as "being determined." We prefer the concept of "experience" because nowadays it expresses something more comprehensive than Schleiermacher's "consciousness."²⁵ Brunner holds, similarly, that in the relation of man to God, God is first, man second, and that this order is irreversible: "This relation, although two-sided, does not have equal or interchangeable terms. More correctly it is one-sided in that it

24. CD I/1. p.220.

25. *Ibid.*, pp.226f. cf. von Balthasar: "Für Schleiermacher die Urerfahrung des Gefühls für Gott, oberhalb aller Reflexion liegt, genau dort steht für Barth der Glaube -- nur eben nicht als ein Apriori der Vernunft oder als eine Setzung des Geistes, sondern als ein Gesetzsein durch das wahre und konkrete Wort Gottes. Von dort her ist Vernunft wirkliche Vernunft, ist Erkenntnis wahre Erkenntnis". *op. cit.*, p.150. Also Cushman: "He[Barth] has one thing in his favor. In theology God is a sort of first, an ordinarily acknowledged prius. I suppose every Christian, and, possibly, every Christian theologian, is prepared to affirm with Barth that man is nothing without God." Cartesianism and the future in theology, The Journal of Religion, XXXVI. 4, Oct.1956. (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., p.218.)

originates with God. The initiative in this relationship is taken by God, and only in a secondary way does man have any initiative in it at all."²⁶ The God-man relationship cannot possibly be inspired or impelled from man's side. The mystical, pantheistic, and idealistic viewpoints assert this, and add that God's relation to man presupposes the relation of man to God; but the Biblical point of view affirms clearly and categorically that God is first, "always and incontrovertibly first, man always and incontrovertibly the second in this relation."²⁷

B. The revelation of Christian faith vs. universal humanity.

Brunner and Barth both evidently charge Schleiermacher with appealing to the common or normal experience of all individuals and generalizing the concept of revelation²⁸ as if everyone can cultivate his own capacity for religion which is essentially native to his existence as a human being. According to them, the revelation of Christian faith must not be transformed into a general conception of religion as something open to achievement by human effort. It is not something universal²⁹ and therefore common to human nature. Barth can only warn men not to be too confident of themselves, since: "What man of himself can believe in are gods who are not really God." When man's false confidence in his own ability to believe in God by his own strength is shattered, the false idols of his own affection also are shattered. God Almighty, however, is God in that He permits Himself to be known only on the basis of His self-revelation.³⁰ Brunner agrees, stating that all that man has ever

26. The Divine-Human Encounter, transl. by A.W. Loos, (London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1944), p.33.

27. Loc. cit.

28. Brunner, The Philosophy of Religion, p.49.

29. Brunner, Revelation and Reason, p.303.

30. Barth, Credo, transl. by J.S. McNab, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936), p.14.

done in history is but an attempt to hide his mortal nakedness from God's sight---an attempt forever foredoomed to futility.³¹

In this direction Barth even goes further, questioning Schleiermacher's interpretation of religion in relation to his concept of the feeling of absolute dependence. Barth understands Schleiermacher as lumping all religion together under the lowest common denominator of the concept of "a feeling of absolute dependence." One might raise the question whether this includes all non-Christian religion, also. In any event one condemns religion, under such categories, to a denial of its authority and to irrelevance for human dignity and human rights. On such a basis, religion, if but a modification of the feeling of absolute dependence, is inevitably opposed, denied, and rejected, and scandalises the essence of humanity.³²

The writer would venture to point out that Barth is not quite doing justice to the distinction between these two concepts of Schleiermacher: the concept of general religious consciousness (feeling) and the concept of specific Christian consciousness (feeling of absolute dependence). This does not mean that Barth does not know the difference between them.³³ But he may not be quite right to apply this criticism to Schleiermacher. Once again, the writer would like to remind the reader that if anyone wishes to criticize Schleiermacher he must not combine or identify his (Schleiermacher's) first soteriology with his second one, otherwise, his criticism will immediately fall apart. It does not mean that one's position of criticism is not right or one's approach inconsistent, but one must realize that this difficulty is due to Schleiermacher's own self-contradiction in putting forward two distinct and incompatible theories of salvation. Even Barth himself, when he wrote the article on Schleiermacher in

31. *Mystik*, p.237.

32. *CD II/2*, p.553.

33. *Ibid.*, p.520.

his book Die Protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert, had to shift his position of criticism from time to time, criticizing now the first theory, then the second and so on. The writer wishes to suggest that Barth's unjust criticism in this aspect essentially originated from the overemphasis of his own theocentric notion on Schleiermacher's humanizing interpretation of the Christian life, as could be attested by this other passage from Barth: "It is curious enough that the humanism of Schleiermacher ultimately culminates in this inhuman view of the relationship of man to God, it being necessary in the last resort to protest against his doctrine of religion in the name of humanity itself."³⁴

Therefore, in spite of Schleiermacher's own inconsistency and Barth's unjust criticism of him in this respect, it is still true to say that Schleiermacher's conception of religion cannot be regarded as a Christian attempt to understand religion, for he thinks that all the other religions have the norm that gives them their validity in a rudimentary form: i.e., in their religious feeling.

In this connection Brunner points out that the ethical dimension of human operations, in fact the entire realm of human religion and metaphysics, has been invaded by something qualitatively and fundamentally different from everything man may know in and of himself. This invader is the Word of God.³⁵ Brunner comments: "No religion knows the concept of revelation as Christianity holds it. In all other religions, revelation relates itself to singulars and is therefore an aggregate of many single revelations which may go on to the end of time. No religion ever dared to affirm seriously that God became man."³⁶ Nor is

34. Ibid., p.553.

35. The Word and the World, p.17; cf. Mystik, p.189.

36. The Theology of Crisis, p.39.

this opinion a mere illusion. Christian faith is not simply a modification of general human metaphysical or religious knowledge, as modern philosophy (ever since Schleiermacher) has assumed it to be.³⁷ But Brunner also affirms that Christ is the fulfilment and the judgment upon all religions together with their history. In His light are exposed both the truth and the untruth of all religion (cf. John 3:18ff.). The history of religion shows that "there is no such thing as a steady approximation to him: for all approximation signifies at the same time a growing distance," even if one were merely to compare between Christianity and the perspective of pure phenomenology.³⁸ And Brunner emphasizes, with reference to this, that unless revelation is "something other than ethics, metaphysics, or religion, something different in its source as well as in its content,"³⁹ it is not Christian faith, but merely moral activity or an ethical system of man.

It is significant to point out that it is the Gospel which discounts all human efforts or attempts to approach God. "It opens another way, the only way, God's way. There only the word 'faith' and, therefore, the word 'God' find their true meaning."⁴⁰ Tracing back the original meaning of the very word "faith," one can see how it is defined by Brunner: "Faith! is the answer to the question: what shall I do? It is a self-integration, a self-opening---and a going to the Father."⁴¹ Evidently the situation is depicted as that in the parable of the prodigal son in the Bible: an upheaval is impending, and even something transcendental⁴² is involved, and a personal decision is demanded, not an

37. The Word and the World, pp.17f.

38. The Philosophy of Religion, p.131.

39. The Word and the World, p.18.

40. The Theology of Crisis, p.61.

41. "'Glaube'! ist die Antwort auf die Frage: Was soll ich tun? Er ist ein Sichzusammennehmen, ein Sichaufmachen -- und-zum-Vater-Gehen." Mystik, p.152.

aesthetical analysis of religion which is everywhere possible and is even enjoyable to have.⁴³ It is significant to note that Brunner wishes to negate Schleiermacher's artistic approach to religion. To him, art, in this aspect, is even to be regarded as dangerous, for its aesthetic flavour takes reflection for reality:

Art contains an element of danger which produces a certain hostility towards religion: the danger, namely, of taking the reflection for the reality, or at any rate of resting content with it. Thus art becomes a substitute for faith, which is sought because it does not demand decision, as faith does, but merely the attitude of a spectator, or of one who is swayed hither and thither by the artistic influences around him; that is, it is not a real devotion, it is merely aesthetic. 44

Brunner points out that the meaning of faith is different from that expressed in Schleiermacher's interpretation of it: "Faith is no Habitus. But that is precisely what Schleiermacher's piety is. 'The conception of the Christian pious states of feeling' is indeed his doctrine of faith." And Brunner explains: "His piety is not a dialogue, but a 'process,' a natural occurrence. It deals with mixture and admixture, instead of decisions; with a relationship between forces, instead of one from person to person."⁴⁵ As a result, Barth points out that "a doctrinal passage 'On service in the divine Word' is not lacking even in Schleiermacher's Glaubenslehre (s.133f). But we

42. The parable of the prodigal son described in the Bible seems to have involved a psychological element known as telepathy which happened in both the minds of the father and the son when they had departed each other.

43. Mystik, p.167.

44. The Divine Imperative, p.500.

45. "Glaube ist kein Habitus. Das aber ist gerade Schleiermachersche Frömmigkeit. 'Auffassung der christlichen frommen Gemüts zustände' ist ja seine Lehre vom Glauben." Mystik, p.153; Also: "Seine 'Frömmigkeit ist kein Gespräch, sondern ein 'Prozess', ein Naturvorgang Statt um Entscheidungen handelt es sich um Mischungen und Entmischungen, statt um ein Verhältnis von Person zu Person, um eines zwischen Kräften." Mystik, p.159.

are at once told that 'the divine Word' is nothing else than 'the spirit in all men,' i.e. of all who are united in the Church (sl34,3)."⁴⁶

Thus it is seen that in Schleiermacher's interpretation of faith, according to Brunner's and Barth's criticism, faith is but the spirit of a religious man. It is his piety which denies the Word of God of revelation. When Barth points out that "the spirit in all men" is Schleiermacher's interpretation of "divine Word," Barth means to assert on the contrary that these are two absolutely different things. As von Balthasar explains: "The absolute point of [Barth's] system is the meeting between Word and faith: Word is the expression of the absolute Creator God, faith is the expression of the entire creatureliness of man, as it has already been made participant in divine possibility; transformed, redeemed and exalted by the Word."⁴⁷

2. Dogmatics is a knowledge of faith ---
 --- a response to the Word.

When referring back to the starting-point of dogmatics, Barth quotes his brother, saying: "That the beginning of theology takes place in a determination of being, of man...is fundamentally a bit of Liberalism. It might have been thought that it would have proved ^Winpracticable to undertake for one moment to speak first of man as a believer, apart from God."⁴⁸ According to Barth, the knowledge of dogmatics cannot be formulated outside dogmatics; therefore he says: "In that case it is held

46. CD I/1. p.68.

47. "Der Absolutpunkt des System ist die Berührung zwischen Wort und Glaube: Wort ist Exponent des schlechthin schöpferischen Gottes, Glaube ist Exponent der gesamten Geschöpflichkeit des Menschen, wie sie bereits vom Wort erhoben, erlöst, umgewendet, göttlicher Möglichkeit teilhaft gemacht worden ist." Karl Barth: Darstellung und Deutung seiner Theologie, p.216.

48. CD I/1. p.39; cf. KD III/2. p.23.

with Schleiermacher 'that all propositions occurring here cannot themselves be dogmatics as well (D. Chr. Gl. sl.1).'⁴⁹ As Weber explains it, Barth holds that "the norm of Christian knowledge, the 'criterion of dogmatics,' is not to be found...in a universal human possibility---as in Modernism...On the contrary, the criterion of dogmatics is 'the Word of God.'"⁵⁰ Brunner even emphasizes the importance of the Word as absolutely essential to all truth: "The Word is the basic fact of human existence, that which makes it human. Not to reason, but to the Word, this first place belongs."⁵¹ And he adds: "This is the irrational, which utters 'the mystery which has been hidden before the world, and is now revealed,' that the eternal truth enters in time, that the fundamental on which all fundamental rest and the truth of all truths, through which alone the truth of man is 'called into existence,' speaks to us."⁵² Therefore, Brunner explains: "But theology is the science, which has faith as its presupposition. It is therefore church science, i.e., an orderly exposition in faith comprehensible only in relation to the propositions of faith."⁵³ And he points out that the difference between the word of revelation and the word of mysticism:

Mysticism also speaks of a word, but not as a factum from outside, historical and unique. For mysticism the word is

49. CD I/1. p.40.

50. Weber, Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1953), p.23.

51. "Das Wort ist die Grundtatsache der menschlichen Existenz, das was sie menschlich macht. Nicht der Vernunft, sondern dem Wort gehört diese erste Stelle zu." Mystik, p.88.

52. "Das ist das Irrationale, dass 'das Geheimnis, das verborgen gewesen vor der Welt, jetzt offenbart' ist, dass die ewige Wahrheit in der Zeit hervortritt, dass der Grund aller Gründe und die Wahrheit aller Wahrheiten spricht, uns anspricht und dadurch erst die Wahrheit vom Menschen 'ins Dasein ruft.'" Ibid., p.5.

53. "Theologie aber ist diejenige Wissenschaft, die den Glauben zur Voraussetzung hat. Sie ist darum kirchliche Wissenschaft, d.h. eine geordnete Besinnung über den im Glauben allein erfassbaren Zusammenhang der Glaubenssätze." Ibid., p.358.

the eternal principle and precisely the expression of unbroken continuity, whereas the Word of revelation on the contrary expresses the event of reconciliation through the Mediator, and is the highest expression of the abrogation of continuity, of the wrath of God, and of the breach between Him and the creature. 54

Thus far, judging from what has been discussed, we see that Brunner and Barth both hold this belief in common against Schleiermacher: that the revelation of the Christian faith is not grounded on any anthropological possibility, but rather is alien to it.⁵⁵

Barth raises several questions at one point. May revelation be regarded as an event on the basis of some so-called "existential potentiality" which is to be distinguished from the actuality of revelation? Does some "universally human" category exist, "of which this special thing can be claimed subsequently as the realization? Is there an existential ontological prius to this ontic existential thing?"⁵⁶ From such challenging questions we can know only what is actual, but can also know that this is the essential characteristic of faith.⁵⁷ Therefore, the human possibility reaches out for the divine, seeking what is ultimately only a rational possibility.⁵⁸ Barth rejects all

54. "Auch die Mystik spricht vom Wort, aber nicht vom äusseren, geschichtlichen, nie vom einmaligen Faktum; sondern das Wort ist dem mystiker ewiges Prinzip und damit gerade Ausdruck der ungebrochenen Kontinuität, während das Offenbarungswort, das Versöhnungsgeschehen im Mittler, umgekehrt der höchste Ausdruck der aufgehobenen Kontinuität, des Zornes Gottes, des Risses zwischen ihm und der Kreatur ist." *Ibid.*, p.384.

55. Torrance writes: "Revelation is given to us only in terms of what it is not, in the humanity of those to whom it is given, so that from first to last we have to reckon with an essential bi-polarity." *The Place of Christology in Biblical and Dogmatic Theology, Essays in Christology for Karl Barth*, p.15.

56. *CD I/1*, p.40; cf. *Credo*, p.65.

57. Brunner: "Das Christentum steht und fällt in seiner Besonderheit mit diesem Glauben, dass in Christus Gott selbst mit der Menschheit handle und zu ihr rede, und zwar nur dort: er selbst. Dies, dieses Unerhörte, dieses exklusive, dieses

such emphases from a methodological standpoint, since they are the results or propositions of some general philosophical anthropology by which, however valid or invalid of themselves, we cannot allow ourselves to be influenced.⁵⁹ Brunner understandably adds: "The Word is more than reason, because in the Word comes to expression the fact that man has reason not as a possession in himself, but as a gift."⁶⁰ Therefore, Christian theology does not require a rational knowledge as its basis but revelation. Granted that theology and philosophy may stand on common grounds in demonstrating the intelligible connections which embrace all things, this is not the logos of the natural reasoning process (as in philosophy) but the logos of revelation. Christian theology, then, cannot be made to present faith rationally by clothing it in scientific form, but must properly distinguish between revelation and religion by means of clear-cut definitions and specific concepts.⁶¹ For Brunner holds "that this Word is actually spoken, is the Gospel; this word is the truth itself, this is faith."⁶²

Barth agrees with Brunner that Christian faith is truth in

Wunder meint der Christ, wenn er von Offenbarung spricht." Philosophie und Offenbarung, (Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr 'Paul Siebeck' 1925), p.15.

58. CD I/1. p.232.

59. Ibid., p.233.

60. "Das Wort ist mehr als die Vernunft, weil im Wort zum Ausdruck kommt, dass der Mensch die Vernunft nicht als Eigenbesitz, sondern als Geschenk hat." Mystik, pp.88f.

61. The Philosophy of Religion, p.14.

62. "Dass dieses Wort tatsächlich gesprochen sei, ist das Evangelium; dass dieses Wort die Wahrheit selbst sein, das ist der Glaube." Mystik, p.95. cf. "Ein Wort, das ich von irgendwoher zu begründen vermag, ist eben darum nicht Gottes Wort, nicht im strengen Sinn Mit-teilung, sondern irgendwie immanente, weltliche Wahrheit, nicht Offenbarungswahrheit, sondern Vernunftwahrheit, nicht Gnadengeschenk, sondern Selbst meines erkennenden Ichs." Vom Werk des Heiligen Geistes, (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr 'Paul Siebeck' 1935), pp.12f.

itself and completely independent of any human norm of truth. According to him, it is certainly not the case that dogmatics first has to prove or defend itself to those outside (i.e., in the face of modern man's own reason). As Weber puts it, Barth admits: "To be sure, dogmatics by its very nature will always be a kind of apologetic."⁶³ Barth, in other words, ^{speaks of} dogmatics as "the inquiry about the Word of God in Church proclamation," of necessity a critical inquiry into the agreement of that proclamation with respect solely to the revelation attested to in Holy Scripture, and not with regard to human norms or value judgments, or even with respect to some standard of divine truth which may already have the sanction of ecclesiastical recognition and proclamation.⁶⁴ Barth therefore denounces any historical evolution of revelation or of the God-man continuity in religious experience. He could not acknowledge these factors as dogmas, because they have no "roots" in revelation (i.e., in the Biblical attestation of it) such as dogmas must have.⁶⁵

According to Brunner and Barth, faith actually means to be responsive to the Word of God;⁶⁶ therefore, faith demands obedience. As Brunner says: "This is faith, the 'religion' of the Old and the New Testaments, of the Apostles and the Reformers. But thereby it radically discloses their opposition to all mysticisms which are alien to, and despise, and are hostile to the Word."⁶⁷ Thus, Schleiermacher's enjoyable usage of the hyphen ("-"), and the most valid and defensible word "consciousness" which he attaches to all theological notions, are wrecked by this

63. Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics, p.22.

64. CD I/1. p.304.

65. Ibid., pp.356f.

66. Brunner: "Ich bin angesprochen, darum verantwortlich." Philosophie und Offenbarung, p.10.

67. "Das ist der Glaube, die 'Religion' des Alten und Neuen Testaments, der Apostel und der Reformatoren. Damit ist aber auch ihr Gegensatz zu aller wortfremden, wortverachtenden, ja wortfeindlichen Mystik an der Wurzel aufgedeckt." Mystik, p.97.

solid fact of the revelation of God in Christ, an event in truth (for it happened by truth). There would be no self-cherishing of mental states here, but simply faith in this incarnate Word of God.⁶⁸

Brunner points out that: "As Schleiermacher replaces the relationship 'Anspruch-Gehorsam' by a passive concept of being impressed, his religion lacks content as well as seriousness. word, seriousness and personality belong inseparably to one another."⁶⁹ Barth adds that Schleiermacher's misunderstanding of the nature of claim and obedience at this point makes his presentation "so profoundly unsatisfactory." This view is, in one sense, even non-Christian, and "intolerable" from any Christian perspective, since it paves the way for every possible sort of tyranny or caprice and, consequently, for a most disobedience to God.⁷⁰ Brunner assures us that "faith arises from nothing other than the divine promise."⁷¹ And he speaks of "the Pietist error" which transfers its focus from the Word and the divine promise to the subjective experience and feelings of the individual.⁷² Therefore, with a play upon words, he says: "In the region of the Word, there exists answering or contradiction. Answering is faith; contradiction is unbelief."⁷³ Brunner makes a further

68. Barth says: "If we ask further why we must believe the Word of God spoken in this event, and obey it, again and above all the only answer we can give is that this is God's free will, and as such His omnipotent will. This is all absolutely above us, and we are absolutely accountable to it all, because it is all in some way God Himself, and God is free to be God in this way both in Himself and therefore also for us." CD II/1. p.561.

69. "Indem Schleiermacher das Verhältnis: Anspruch-Gehorsam durch ein passives Beeindrucktwerden ersetzt, fehlt seiner Religion so wie der Inhalt auch der Ernst. Wort, Ernst und Persönlichkeit gehören untrennbar zusammen." Mystik, p.159.

70. CD II/2. p.553.

71. "Glaube entsteht aus der göttlichen Verheissung und aus nichts anderem." Mystik, p.167.

72. The Divine Imperative, p.565.

73. "In der Region des Wortes geht es um Ent-sprechen oder Wider-sprechen. Entsprechen ist Glaube, Widersprechen ist Unglaube." Mystik, p.165.

comment at this point in comparing faith, to some extent, with knowledge:

For faith is nothing in itself, as little as the echo is something in itself. Faith is the echo of God's Word, hearing the Word, obedient to the Word, trusting in the Word. This Word is only the Word of God in faith, therefore there can only be a believing theologian; without faith he is perhaps a scholar of religion, of psychology, or of philosophy. 74

Thus, one must not confuse knowledge with faith, for faith demands obedience and has characteristics essentially different from those of knowledge. Therefore, the task of theology is fundamentally dissimilar to that of the moral or intellectual systems. It is seen here that Brunner even rejects the kind of profane study which follows: "The psychology of religion is something completely different from theology; it is a profane science, i.e., it has faith only as object, not as presupposition."⁷⁵ Barth has also taken into consideration the fact that "Schleiermacher has attempted to prove the possibility of theology as science, [and with this intention] he has written...his dogmatics."⁷⁶ One may note that Barth quite sympathizes with Schleiermacher's historical position: "Perhaps he [Schleiermacher] has after all transformed faith into knowledge."⁷⁷ But Barth ultimately rejects his theological method, even considering his

74. "Denn der Glaube ist an sich nichts, sowenig als das Echo an sich etwas ist. Der Glaube ist Echo des Gotteswortes, Wort-hören, Wort-gehorsam, Wort-vertrauen. Dieses Wort ist nur dem Glauben Gottes Wort, darum kann nur der Glaubende Theologe sein: abgesehen vom Glauben ist einer vielleicht Religionswissenschaftler, -Psycholog, -Philosoph." Ibid., p.358.

75. "Nur ist diese Religionspsychologie etwas ganz anderes als Theologie; sie ist eine profane Wissenschaft, d.h. sie hat Glauben nur als Objekt, nicht als Voraussetzung." Loc. cit.

76. "Schleiermacher hat die Möglichkeit der Theologie als Wissenschaft damit zu erweisen versucht, dass er seine Dogmatik -----geschrieben hat." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.384.

77. "Er hat vielleicht die Fictis doch in Gnosis verwandelt." Ibid., p.385.

apologetic purpose: "He is, as an apologist, not a Christian theologian, but a moralist and a philosopher of religion."⁷⁸

3. The unity of Scripture cannot be denied.

Concerning Holy Scripture, it is important to carry the discussion further, since the serious mistake in Schleiermacher's orientation of his theological thought lies partly in his attitude towards the Scriptures.

Brunner and Barth take both the Old Testament and the New Testament to be witnesses to the revelation of God. Barth writes that the basic assertion at this point is the assertion that the Bible is a witness of the divine revelation. This assertion, in turn, is based simply on the fact that the Bible answers man's question about the divine revelation and confronts us with the lordship of the triune God.⁷⁹ Brunner writes: "It is the testimony or witness to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ."⁸⁰ In fact, Brunner and Barth both appeal to the whole Bible as a unity, which consists of one history and one covenant. History begins here, is centered in Jesus Christ, and hastens thence to its culmination. The Church must necessarily, as always, show the unity of the divine covenant which ties the whole together. Both Testaments must be read together as an affirmation of the one work and one revelation of the one God. The Church therefore has been, from its inception, the Church of Jews and Gentiles (cf. Gal. 6:16, "the Israel of God"; Rom. 11:26, "all Israel"). Deny this unity and one denies Jesus Christ Himself.⁸¹ Brunner agrees, pointing out that the Christian religion asserts not only the unity of the divine revelation, but the exclusive unity of that revelation as attested to in Holy Scripture. God's Word is the

78. "Er ist qua Apologet nicht christlicher Theologe sondern Ethiker und Religionsphilosoph." *Ibid.*, p.396.

79. CD I/2. p.462.

80. *The Word and the World*, p.83.

81. CD IV/1. pp.670f.

Word of Jesus Christ in both Old and New Testament; it becomes reality in Jesus Christ.⁸² Thus, according to Brunner and Barth, the Old Testament is indispensably necessary for understanding the revelation in the New Testament. "For a knowledge of this continuity of the being and activity of God, of His condescension," says Barth, "the Old Testament is indispensable as the presupposition of the New."⁸³ Brunner points out that "the two covenants are related to each other as preparation is related to 'fulfilment.'"⁸⁴ Though Brunner recognizes the difficulty in which Schleiermacher is involved, and although he also admits that while the divine revelation in the Old Testament and the New Testament is one, a difference between them evidently exists, he adds that together they render a service of mutual interpretation and that only as the two are taken together can the Biblical revelation be adequately understood or even recognized.⁸⁵ Nor does Barth deny the reality of the temptation to reject the Old Testament: "The expectation of revelation in Old Testament is prophecy, not prediction to be controlled experimentally by logic. That is why it was and is possible to look past it. That is why it could and can be rejected."⁸⁶ Barth criticizes Schleiermacher for his intention of removing the Old Testament from the canon of the Church, saying that if Jesus Christ is the object of both the Old and the New Testament witness, then his judgment of the historical connection of these two so-called religion (i.e., Christianity and Judaism), is erroneous and wrongly approached. Schleiermacher sees the Old testament as primarily "the most universal literary aid to the understanding

82. The Mediator, pp.172f.

83. CD IV/1. p.173.

84. Revelation and Reason, p.81; cf. "The Old Testament revelation is the preparation for the revelation in the New Testament." Ibid., p.134.

85. Ibid., p.22.

86. CD I/2. p.100.

of the New Testament" (Kurze Darst., sl41), because "Christianity" stands in a "special historical connexion" with "Judaism" ---although this does not exclude Christianity, in respect of its nature, from standing in just as neutral an attitude to Judaism as to heathendom (The Christian Faith, E.T., sl2): "that the Jewish codex does not contain a normal exposition of peculiar Christian statements of faith will soon be generally acknowledged" (Kurze Darst., sl15). One might not even object to Schleiermacher's explicit wish to see the Old Testament removed from the Christian canon if it be understood that the major concern is not "Judaism," "Christianity," or Old Testament or New Testament piety, but simply Jesus Christ as the object of both the Old Testament and the New Testament witness. We deal, not in historical relationship between two religions or with their "kinship" or "homogeneity," but with the unity of revelation which links the two religions together.⁸⁷ Therefore, one cannot simply depreciate and downgrade the Old Testament message by generalizing its particular aspect. The important point here is that the Old Testament shares with the New Testament its witness to the historical revelation in Jesus Christ.

Brunner goes even further, reminding us that from Schleiermacher's knowledge of the Old Testament, one can judge that his knowledge of the New Testament is also unsound: "It has always been noticed how little understanding Schleiermacher had of the Old Testament. This is also the criterion for the genuineness of his understanding of the New Testament. For without grounding in the Old Testament the relationship to God of the New Testament---not in the historical, but in the objective eternal sense---cannot be understood."⁸⁸ Brunner explains how

87. Ibid., p.79.

88. "Es ist immer schon aufgefallen, wie wenig Verständnis Schleiermacher für das Alte Testament gehabt hat. Das ist auch das Kriterium für die Echtheit seines Verständnisses für das

Schleiermacher got into such a position of rejecting the Old Testament and inclining only to the New Testament: "In the New Testament there arises the appearance of mystical features from the fact that here in the centre stands love, i.e., the self-communication of God to men, the reconciliation of the Creator with the creature which was separated from Him."⁸⁹ Brunner means that the New Testament is easier to fit into the system of mysticism, but in the Old Testament "God speaks, indeed, He speaks as the Lord. Our relationship to Him has no other base than this, that He is the Lord who speaks to us."⁹⁰ In the Old Testament, one can easily imagine that the holiness of God militates against the mystical relationship with Him. Yet that very thing has occurred which the Old Testament, with its concept of the holiness of the manifest God, seeks to avoid.⁹¹ "That," says Barth, "is why Schleiermacher is no friend of the Old Testament; because he sees in the concept of the law (which according to his view is dominant there), the separation between heaven and earth, grace and sin."⁹²

Thus, Brunner and Barth catch Schleiermacher sharply at his weak point. They both explain their different viewpoints

Neue Testament. Denn ohne die Grundlegung im Alten Testament ist das Gottesverhältnis des Neuen -- nicht etwa im historischen, sondern im sachlich-ewigen Sinne -- nicht zu verstehen." Mystik, p.160.

89. "Im Neuen Testament entsteht der Schein mystischer Züge dadurch, dass hier die Liebe, d.h. die Selbstmitteilung Gottes an den Menschen, die Versöhnung des Schöpfers mit der von ihm getrennten Kreatur, im Mittelpunkt steht." Ibid., pp.386f.

90. "Dass Gott redet. Und zwar, dass er redet als der Herr. Unser Verhältnis zu ihm hat keinen anderen Grund als den, dass er, als der Herr, uns anspricht." Ibid., p.160.

91. CD I/1. p.371.

92. "Darum ist Schleiermacher kein Freund des Alten Testaments, weil er in dem nach seiner Meinung dort beherrschten Begriff des Gesetzes die Trennung zwischen Himmel und Erde, zwischen Gnade und Sünde sieht." Die Protestantische Theologie, pp.403f.

in this matter; first Brunner: "It is necessary at least briefly to touch on the question about the relation of the Bible to mysticism. The opposition to mysticism in the Old Testament is especially clear. There is nothing palpably further from mysticism than the Old Testament."⁹³ Then Barth: "The Old Testament like the New Testament is the witness to revelation, which is decidedly to be regarded as a free, utterly once-for-all, concrete action of God."⁹⁴ Deviations from this line of thought must be avoided. The divine revelation in the Old Testament is ever a self-relation to a specific nation which, nevertheless, periodically confronts God in certain individuals through whom He is pleased to act in His sovereign freedom.⁹⁵ Delete the Old Testament with its witness to this fact, as Schleiermacher sought to do, and we delete the very foundation on which the Christian Church is built. The Old Testament is not merely a prolegomenon to the New Testament which we may now lay aside or replace.⁹⁶

Both Brunner and Barth hold that the Old Testament cannot even be made equal in value to the other religious records or histories, and that therefore it is not possible to substitute for it wherever or whenever deemed necessary. Barth says: "We cannot eliminate the Old Testament or substitute for it the records of the early religious history of other peoples."⁹⁷ Brunner remarks: "So far as the Old Testament is characterized by the Covenant with God, by the election of Israel from among the other nations, there is a very marked contrast between the Old

93. "Es ist notwendig, die Frage nach dem Verhältnis der Bibel zur Mystik wenigstens kurz zu streifen. Ganz besonders deutlich ist der Gegensatz zur Mystik im Alten Testament. Es gibt nichts handgreiflich mystikferneres als das Alte Testament." Mystik, p.386.

94. CD I/2. p.80.

95. Loc. cit.

96. Ibid., p.488.

97. Loc. cit.

Testament religion and all others."⁹⁸ Therefore, according to their evaluation of the Old Testament, Schleiermacher is evidently wrong in giving a limited value to the Old Testament, a value equivalent to that of other religious records.

Schleiermacher was not alone in interpreting the Bible as a documentation of a specific history, of the spirit of the Bible as the spirit of this history. Several of the 18th Century rationalists also attempted this. Perhaps such a procedure gained ^{for} these men a more concrete view of the Bible in its human form, but it blinded them to what Barth calls "the knowledge of the free grace of God as the unity of Scripture and revelation."⁹⁹ It was even argued that the Bible could not accurately be called the Word of God. In this connection, Brunner also reminds us that if the mystery of revelation is interpreted in terms of immanence, then one must not forget that this approach presents a meaning directly opposite to the original one by substituting a content from the world of thought for what the authors of the Old testament meant.¹⁰⁰ Therefore Brunner complains that Schleiermacher has rejected the faith of the Reformers and not interpreted the revelation in the Bible as they understood it: "In the Bible as well as for the Reformers, revelation is, of course, just that which Schleiermacher declined: the communication of a wonderful, supernatural knowledge of God and divine things; and faith is nothing but the acceptance that these divine communications are true even in contradiction to human experience and apprehension."¹⁰¹ It may be seen that Barth, more or less,

98. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics II. (London: Lutterworth Press, 1952), p.232.

99. CD I/2. p.526.

100. The Theology of Crisis, pp.104f.

101. "In der Bibel wie für die Reformatoren ist Offenbarung allerdings gerade das, was Schleiermacher ablehnt: Mitteilung eines wunderbaren, übernatürlichen Wissens von Gott und göttlichen Dingen, und der Glaube nichts anderes als das Fürwahrhalten dieser göttlichen Mitteilungen im Gegensatz zu menschlicher Erfahrung und Verständigkeit." Mystik, p.81.

agrees with Brunner here: "Schleiermacher has reversed the order of the Reformers. The question of the act of man over against God interests him."¹⁰² And he sighs at Schleiermacher's overconfidence in man: "In any case one can master Christianity, insofar as, having the disposal of the insight [inherent] in one's nature and [one's human] worth, one can handle the Bible and the dogma in unchecked freedom."¹⁰³

Finally, concerning the attitude toward reading the Scriptures, Barth gives us a corrective reminder that man must not be over-confident of his powers of apprehension, but rather had better be prepared to listen to the Word of God which might be imparted to him in a way quite contrary to his own ideas or feelings. Man is wrong, we find, "if he stubbornly insists on trying to know for himself in what everything will consist if it is imparted to him." Man must, instead, steel himself against the realization that what actually is imparted to him may come in a way entirely opposite to what his own ideas and feelings may have dictated, but a way entirely grounded in the Word of God itself.¹⁰⁴ And on this point Brunner agrees with Barth by saying that:

Faith is not only an assurance of a content which was already known and understood before, but at the same time also a new apprehension. Everyone who has come to faith will describe his experience with the Word of the Bible: as an illumination, an arising of sense-light where before there was sense-darkness, the apprehension of something before unapprehended.
105

102. "Schleiermacher hat die reformatorische Anordnung umgekehrt. Ihn interessiert die Frage nach dem Tun des Menschen Gott gegenüber." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.411.

103. "Man kann das Christentum jedenfalls insofern meistern, als man, verfügend über die Einsicht in sein Wesen und seinen Wert, mit der Bibel und dem Dogma in ungehemmter Freiheit umgehen, schalten und walten kann." Ibid., p.399.

104. CD I/2. p.738.

105. "Der Glaube ist nicht nur ein Gewisswerden eines vorher schon bekannten und verstandenen Inhaltes, sondern zugleich auch ein neues Verstehen. So wird jeder, der zum Glauben gekommen ist, seine Erfahrung mit dem Bibelwort beschreiben: als eine Erleuch-

4. The mystery of revelation cannot be solved.

Now we turn to further discussion of Brunner's and Barth's critique of Schleiermacher's relativistic approach to the Christian faith of revelation. In the first instance, they disagree with Schleiermacher's attempt to understand the eternal truth as if it were intelligible by means of a relativistic analysis. Brunner criticizes him thus:

Accordingly limited by the once accepted category, he contents himself with the only differentiation which is possible here: strong and weak, of long or short duration, ease or restraint in the 'process of becoming efficient' [Inkrafttretens]. In short, the description throughout corresponds to the principle that we have to deal with a 'process', a dynamic occurrence to which, therefore, only such expressions can be applied which also can be used in the whole realm of causal events: slowing down and speeding up, strengthening and weakening. To these merely quantitative concepts is with a few exceptions all that life reduced which Protestant dogmatics understands by the super-qualitatively meant words: sin, repentance, forgiveness, justification, redemption, rebirth etc. 106

As long as Schleiermacher believes in this kind of interpretation, that man can explain to himself the meaning of faith

tung, ein Aufgehen von Sinn-licht, wo vorher Sinn-dunkel war, das Verstehen eines vorher Unverstandenen." Vom Werk des Heiligen Geistes, p.16.

106. "Er begnügt sich, unter dem Zwang der einmal angenommenen Kategorie, auch mit der einzigen Differenzierung, die hier möglich ist: stark und schwach, lang- und kurzdauernd, Leichtigkeit und Gehemmtheit des Inkrafttretens, kurz die Beschreibung entspricht durchaus der Grundlegung, dass es sich um einen 'Prozess,' einen dynamischen Vorgang handle, auf den also nur die Ausdrücke Anwendung haben, die überall im Gebiet kausalen Geschehens Anwendung haben, Verlangsamung und Beschleunigung, Verstärkung und Abschwächung. Auf diese rein quantitativen Grössen wird, von Ausnahmen abgesehen, all jenes Leben, das die evangelische Dogmatik unter den ungeheuer qualitativgemeinten Worten: Sünde, Busse, Vergebung, Rechtfertigung, Erlösung, Wiedergeburt usw. begreift, zurückgeführt,..." Mystik, p.85.

or revelation in terms of idealism or relativism, he will only be confused in himself and he will surely not understand the true or original meanings of these terms. He can only look to himself for himself. As a result, the conclusion is: all is in man, all he has to do is to seek what is possible in a self-religious man and work it out from within.¹⁰⁷ Barth notes now, from this viewpoint, too much attention has been focussed upon human needs and problems in time, and particularly upon mankind's positive possibilities. What has become central to an understanding of God's eternity was God's actual relationship to time in its duration, along with His presence in and reign over the world and the soul and the religious experience of the individual.¹⁰⁸ Brunner notes that in the realm of faith, all idealistic approaches made by man should be clearly demarcated, and no confusion made with idealism. "This is itself a matter for the decision of faith; experience of faith and its truth is not the truth of an idea but truth as personal encounter."¹⁰⁹

Barth, trusting to the Christian faith grounded in revelation, regards the attempt to gain freedom from illusion by means of human possibility or idealistic truth as but a real illusion of our own, "if Bible and Church are considered apart from the revelation which constitutes them or if by revelation, with Schleiermacher, is meant merely the peculiar beginning of the religion which happens to be our own."¹¹⁰ For Barth quotes Luther and affirms that no way leads to heaven save the way pointed out by Christ and prepared and reserved for us through His

107. Barth, Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.207.

108. CD II/1. p.632. Brunner also asserted that "Christian faith, however, is concerned with something very different...a knowledge of God which in no way is founded in man...It is knowledge of God from beyond all human possibilities." The Word and the World, p.16.

109. Revelation and Reason, p.399.

110. CD I/1. p.176.

Word, lest otherwise we be treading on air.¹¹¹ Feeling is not to be confused with faith: feeling does not help us to fly up to heaven; in fact, taking it seriously and by itself, it is even un-Christian also. Barth continually quotes Luther to the effect that there is an essential difference between the Christian view and the pagan:

This then is the difference between the Christian and the pagan that a godless man and a pagan departeth like a cow, seeing, opining, and judging all things according to the old birth as what he feels and grasps. But a Christian followeth not as he seeth, but followeth as he seeth not nor feeleth and abideth by the witness of Christ, heareth what Christ saith, whom he followeth right into the darkness. 112

Evidently, what has been discussed here is that faith is a venture, not a human discovery; it is a matter of decision, not something it is possible to invent. Therefore the modernist has obscured the true meaning of revelation and of faith. McConachie has shown that the very concept of revelation as God's Word has come, in some quarters, to be so vaguely and generally applied (e.g., to science, art, and even human love) as to have no longer any well-defined meaning. It meant any human experience which cut deeper than common, everyday occurrences. Also, divine revelation and human discovery came to be viewed as merely two sides of the selfsame coin of experience.¹¹³ Brunner, similarly, points out: "For the modernist, faith is an empirical discoverable datum; for the Reformers, the opposite of that. They know that one cannot speak of faith psychologically, but only theologically, i.e., from faith."¹¹⁴ And he goes on to explain

111. Ibid., p.194.

112. Loc. cit.

113. Reformation Issues To-day, Reformation Old and New, (edited by Camfield), p.107.

114. "Den Modernen ist Glaube ein empirisch vorfindbares Datum, den Reformatoren das Gegenteil davon. Sie wissen, dass man auch vom Glauben nicht psychologisch, sondern nur theologisch, d.h. aus Glauben, reden kann." Mystik, p.358.

that in Christian faith we confront something very different in nature; for Christian faith, so far from being merely general in nature, consists of a certain relation to God's Word in Jesus Christ. Christ does not point out a general door or pathway within the human soul, but affirmly avers: "I am the Way, I am the Door." The way to God lies, not in some human moral, metaphysical, or religious framework of the intellect, but entirely outside of man in an historical, yet once-for-all Event.¹¹⁵

Thus, it is advanced that the real truth is in Jesus Christ, and that we know Him first before we really know ourselves. As Weber puts it, according to Barth:

The 'really special events in our life...are not those we can affirm as being humanly demonstrable in this way.' On the contrary, they are 'absolutely identical with our participation in the great deeds of God in his revelation'... Believers do not know by themselves. Neither are they 'ignorant.' They are 'co-knowers.' 116

It is God who reveals Himself to man, who, nonetheless, has separated himself from Him; and it is He who speaks to us in His Word, which is a mystery to us. This mystery is not the peculiar growth of our inwardness or the product of our introspection, nor can it be equated with the knowledge of our experience.

Thus, Brunner and Barth oppose Schleiermacher with the charge that his orientation of theological method is basically not responsive to the Word of God; but that it sets man up as the centre and subject of the concept of idealistic interpretation of his own imaginary titanism on one hand, and as the object of the process of psychological analysis of his own humanization of life on the other. As Brunner points out: "It left Schleiermacher no other possibility than to exchange for the

115. The Word and the World, p.19; The Philosophy of Religion, p.50.

116. Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics, pp.66f.

rejected 'dramatic' of redemption the 'pure interior' lyric of 'religious excitability.'¹¹⁷ As he says that Schleiermacher always thinks himself as the subject of religion: "Only the subjectivity itself, the pure being-in-itself, the pure interiority without object, in which no objective foreign substance is to be found, could be the essence of religion; only there could the peace and happiness be found which are the goal of piety."¹¹⁸ One may say that in his whirling in the current of doubt,¹¹⁹ the very core of Christian faith, i.e., revelation which comes from outside of one's soul, is swept or explained away and the mystery of it is resolved by the kind of interpretation which generalizes its concept, which is opposed to faith and is fundamentally and wholly different from the original meaning of revelation. Barth attacks Schleiermacher because "he suspends its [Christian revelation's] position for Christianity, its judgment of truth and the very absoluteness of Christian revelation for this moment."¹²⁰ The haughty position he takes up Barth himself described: "One can be a Christian and a theologian, in the same way as a philosopher or an artist: namely one can confront these things and illuminate, penetrate and shape them, creatively, systematically and in their essential principles, according to man's own peculiar authority."¹²¹ Brunner

117. "Es blieb Schleiermacher keine Möglichkeit, als für die weggeworfene 'Dramatik' der Erlösung einzutauschen: die 'rein innerliche' Lyrik der 'frommen Erregung.'" *Mystik*, p.276.

118. "Nur die Subjektivität selbst, nur das reine In-sich-sein, die reine Innerlichkeit ohne Gegenstand, in der nichts Objektiv-Fremdes mehr zu finden wäre, konnte das Wesen der Religion sein, nur in ihr konnte jene Ruhe und Seligkeit gefunden werden, die das Ziel der Frömmigkeit ist." *Ibid.*, p.57; cf. p.174.

119. Barth: "Man wird im Gegenteil sagen müssen, dass ihr durch die Art, wie er sie vertreten hat, nach all den Verdachten, von denen sie von Anfang an umgeben war, auch noch der des Spinozismus, oder allgemeiner: der Verdacht eines pantheistisch-naturalistischen Monismus zugezogen worden ist, dass er sie also in den Augen aller guten Menschen noch mehr und erst recht in den Schatten gerückt hat." KD III/3. p.132.

explains the true meaning of revelation: for "genuine revelation is something totally different. It is a prophetic word from beyond this human and personal plane of ~~(existence of)~~ existence."¹²² Therefore, he criticizes the mystical view of revelation, which attempts to discover an eternal principle in the totality of nature and thus presents the meaning of revelation purely from the subjectivistic point of view. Revelation, under such a category as the so-called "higher" relation to God ---i.e., the speculative and mystical aspects one encounters in the ultra-sophisticated "religion of educated people"---comes to signify merely the emergence into consciousness of the eternal basis of all phenomena, and an apperception of "eternal truth" or of the growing awareness of a Divine Presence. Revelation, properly viewed as the objective element, and religion, properly the subjective, are fused into one and the same thing and referred to all too generally as "the essence of religion," which man could identify and recognize easily enough were he not hampered by the limitations inherent to his sense-environment.¹²³ But note what Barth says of all this: "To be eternal in a single moment,' as Schleiermacher said at the close of his second Address---for a whole age attempts seemed to be made to compress into this all that they had to say about the eternal God, and significantly it was not said about Him at all but about religious man."¹²⁴

120. "Er suspendiert für diesen Augenblick seine Stellung zum Christentum, sein Urteil über die Wahrheit oder gar Absolutheit der christlicher Offenbarung." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.396.

121. "Man kann Christ und Theologe sein, wie man Philosoph oder Künstler ist: man kann nämlich auch diesem Stoff schöpferisch, systematisch, prinzipiell durchleuchtend, durchdringend und gestaltend aus eigenster Vollmacht gegenübertreten." Ibid., p.399.

122. The Mediator, p.266.

123. Ibid., p.22.

124. CD II/1. p.632.

Brunner criticizes Schleiermacher's system as being fundamentally a system, not of spirit and truth in "dialectico-paradoxical motion," but a system "of repose, of balance and of neutrality"; not a system of antithesis and opposition and action, but a system of continuity and indifference and passivity.¹²⁵

And he sums up: "The paradoxical reconciliation of the absolute antithesis through the divine act is the fundamental character of Christian faith, just as the principle of continuity is the fundamental character of Schleiermacher's system."¹²⁶ One may ask: what is this principle of continuity which Brunner ascribed to Schleiermacher? Again, it is nothing else than his principle of reconciliation operating through the religious consciousness. So far as Barth understands it, it is nothing else than "the great formal principle which is, at the same time, the material principle of the theology of Schleiermacher."¹²⁷

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Barth, then agrees with Schleiermacher that the content of Christian doctrine must correspond to or be relevant and current-for present-day conditions in the Christian world. He also

125. "Aber es ist nicht das System der Wahrheit und des Geistes mit seiner dialektisch-paradoxen Bewegtheit, sondern ein System der Ruhe, des Gleichgewichts und der Neutralität; nicht des Gegensatzes, sondern der Stetigkeit, nicht des Wider-spruchs, sondern der Indifferenz, nicht der Tat, sondern der Passivität." Mystik, p.275.

126. "Die paradoxe Versöhnung der absoluten Gegensätze durch göttliche Tat, das ist der Grundscharakter des christlichen Glaubens, ebenso wie das Stetigkeitsprinzip der Grundcharakter des Schleiermacherschen System ist." Ibid., p.335.

127. "Das grosse Formalprinzip ist zugleich das Materialprinzip der Schleiermacherschen Theologie." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.409.

acknowledges that Schleiermacher actually was conscious of one limitation: viz., that the task of dogmatics belongs to the realm of historical theology, and that dogmatics therefore has to develop the doctrine which is current in the Church at the specific time under consideration, and which corresponds to the Leitmotiv or guiding principle of that period. Schleiermacher, Barth adds, taught this, but this fact had subsequently been ignored and finally forgotten.¹²⁸

128. CD IV/1. p.383.

CHAPTER VII

THE CREATOR AND THE CREATURE

VS. A MYSTERIOUS WHOLE

In this chapter the writer will attempt to show how Brunner and Barth emphasize the qualitative and fundamental (not quantitative and gradual) difference between the Creator and the creature over against Schleiermacher,¹ who thinks human nature is at bottom divine, and that therefore man ultimately is cognizant of the divine.² Barth begins:

But meanwhile under the decisive guidance of Schleiermacher, one had all along the line made the discovery that the real theme of theology in human religion and piety consists in its assertion about itself. One had meanwhile become accustomed when saying 'God' to think simply of an objective content of the pious human consciousness.³

Brunner explains Schleiermacher's key to religion:

Within our feeling, we have the equilibrium which outside we only realize in the relativity of antinomies. Here is the common basis of all the subjective, of all spiritual acts and at the same time the common basis, of all objective reality: the God-consciousness which is, at the same time, God's existence in us. This system of equilibrium can accordingly only fulfill itself in some form of mysticism, as on the other hand, this mysticism demands the thought of identity, the unity of all things which can be experienced within our feeling.⁴

1. Brunner, Die mystik und Das Wort, (Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1924), the First Edition, cf. p.366.

2. Mystik, pp.172; 177.

3. "Man hatte aber unterdessen unter der entscheidenden Führung Schleiermachers auf der ganzen Linie die Entdeckung gemacht, dass das eigentliche Thema der Theologie in der menschlichen Religion und Frömmigkeit, in ihren Aussagen über sich selber bestehe. Man hatte sich unterdessen daran gewöhnt, bei der Vokabel 'Gott' an einen blossen 'Objektgehalt' des frommen menschlichen Bewusstseins zu denken." KD III/2. p.92. As Barth understands it, according to Schleiermacher: "Frömmigkeit sucht nicht

1. The self-revelation of God vs. the immanent system of mysticism.

According to Brunner and Barth, Schleiermacher here introduces the speculative system of a semi-pantheistic view. The origin of this system is rooted in his anthropocentric probing of an imaginary structure of a mysterious whole which soars above the sphere of reality, and in his attempt to incorporate the human with the divine through a hazy light of mysticism;⁵ the Creator and the creature were thus identified by pondering one's own mystical experience for itself and within itself.⁶

nur, hofft nicht nur, erwartet nicht nur, betet nicht nur an, sondern ist jene Mitte, jener Friede, der höher ist als alle Vernunft. Darum heisst Gott verkündigen für Schleiermacher die eigene Frömmigkeit verkündigen." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.406; cf. p.418; same passage is found in Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.153.

4. "Hier, im Gefühl, haben wir das Gleichgewicht, das wir draussen nur in der Relativität der Gegensätze erkennen. Hier ist der Einheitsgrund alles Subjektiven, aller Geistesakte und zugleich der Einheitsgrund aller objektiven Wirklichkeit: das Gottesbewusstsein, das zugleich ein Sein Gottes in uns ist. Dieses System des Gleichgewichtes kann sich also nur in einer Art von Mystik vollenden, wie umgekehrt diese Mystik, die im Gefühl erlebbare Einheit von allem, den Identitätsgedanken fordert." Mystik, p.329.

5. von Balthasar, "Sie verfälscht die Schärfe und Akuität der Offenbarung als echter Tat zwischen Gott und Mensch, indem sie alles in eine nebelhafte mystische Kontemplation verschwimmen lässt, an Stelle von 'Gespräch, Drama, Kampf' das ganze Verhältnis in einen allgemeinen pantheistischen Brei auflöst, worin es kein Ich und kein Du mehr gibt." Op. cit., pp.97f. It is interesting to note that Brunner even ascribes this artistic and plastic perception of mystical unity of a feeling to our situation which is somewhat actual in this way: "Nature is permeated by divine spiritual forces, nature is always both, divine and immaterial, sensual and material. Reality is, like ourselves, animated body and materialised soul, divine nature and materialised divinity. Nature-forces are divine forces and deities are nature-forces. The one changes into the other, nay, the one is the other. This is also a feeling of many of our own day, expressing itself in the art and poetry of recent times in a most elementary way: reality is deeper than materialists think,

The situation, as Brunner explains it, is that "there dwells all that is individual and vital, all that is creative and inspired, in that sphere where nothing has yet hardened in the moulds of clarity."⁷ He continues: "Once again the philosophy of immanence shows its connection with mysticism, as the real religion of the Glaubenslehre."⁸ And he adds: "For Schleiermacher, the relation to God is not faith, but feeling, not trust in the paradoxical truth of the divine Promissio, but the possession and the enjoyment of God which is actually sensible."⁹ Is it not that Schleiermacher postulates a point of continuity between the human and the divine by psychologizing the mental state of a religious mind as if one can ascertain oneself that it lived on the same plane of the divine region?¹⁰ Thus, Brunner writes: "It would give a point, or, rather than a point, an experience, a mental happening, where God would be man, and man God, Creator would be

our senses grasp only its surface, not its depth. Or better, surface and depth are one, the visible is the invisible and the invisible is the visible. Just this mystical unity is reality... This nature, identical with God, is reality. The Christian understanding of reality is of a very different kind, totally unlike all these conceptions. It is determined by the thought that God is the Creator and the world His creation. God therefore is the primary reality. Whatever else we call real is secondary, dependent reality." Christianity and Civilization, (First Part: Foundations. London: Nisbet and Co., Ltd., 1948), pp.17f.

6. The Word and the World, p.60.

7. God and Man, (Transl. with an Introduction by David Cairns. London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1936), p.144.

8. "Noch einmal zeigt sich die Immanenzphilosophie in ihrem Zusammenhang mit der Mystik, als die eigentliche Religion der Glaubenslehre." Mystik, p.145.

9. "Für Schleiermacher ist Beziehung auf Gott nicht Glaube, sondern Gefühl; nicht das Trauen auf die paradoxe Wahrheit der göttlichen Promissio, sondern gegenwärtig-fühlbarer Gottesbesitz, Gottesgenuss." Ibid., p.274.

10. Brunner, "Dass der Mensch in sich selbst heilig, in sich selbst göttlichen Wesens teilhaftig wird." Vom Werk des Heiligen Geistes, p.35.

creature, and creature Creator, where our existence would melt with the divine being, a bit of human life which does not need forgiveness and redemption, but is already redeemed."¹¹ Therefore this process would eventually involve two alternative presuppositions: either bringing down the divine to the human level or deifying the creature.¹² It is no wonder that Brunner points out how religionism can only result in a depersonalized relationship between God and man: "An impersonal God and an impersonal man are the necessary and inevitable consequence of a religion of immanence." He goes on to explain that "a personal God and a personal faith are not possible when our knowledge of God is the result of an interpretation of the world and the Ego."¹³ Brunner further explains and affirms that the true knowledge of a personal God cannot be found in our thought but must be given in revelation through faith: "Personal faith and knowledge of a personal God who is Lord of the world can be gained only when God reveals himself personally."¹⁴ Barth comments on this: "The psychological expression of the idea of God

11. "Dass es doch einen Punkt, o nein, viel mehr als einen Punkt, ein Erleben, ein seelisches Geschehen gebe, wo Gott Mensch und Mensch Gott, wo der Schöpfer Kreatur und die Kreatur Schöpfer sei, wo unser Sosein mit dem göttlichen Sein zusammenfalle, ein Stück menschlichen Lebens, das nicht der Vergebung und Erlösung bedürfe, sondern bereits erlöst sei." *Mystik*, p.188.

12. *Die Mystik und das Wort*, 1924, pp.367f. cf. "Das Ziel ist die Vergottung, d.h. das Einswerden mit jener letzten Wirklichkeit, ob sie nun Gott heisse oder nicht, der Zustand, wo 'Subjekt und Objekt, ersehnd und ersehnt eins sind,' die 'Erhebung des ganzen Selbst bis zu der Stufe, wo eine bewusste und dauernde Vereinigung mit dem Absoluten stattfindet,' die Eini-gung, das wahre Ziel der mystischen Suche,' 'das vergottete Leben,' die Vergottung oder ganzliche Umwandlung des Selbst in Gott.'" *Mystik*, p.369.

13. *The Theology of Crisis*, p.31. Similarly Barth understands Schleiermacher: "Aus der intellektuellen Reflexion auf das fromme Selbstbewusstsein ergeben sich die Aussagen über den frommen Gemütszustand als solchen und an sich. Aus der Reflexion auf das fromme Selbstbewusstsein ergeben sich die Aussagen über Gott." *Die Protestantische Theologie*, p.408.

14. *The Theology of Crisis*, p.31.

is, therefore, a mere form of the inherently impersonal and absolute process of spirit. It is not true in itself, but it has conceptual value. When put in this logical way, the doubtfulness of the whole approach becomes apparent."¹⁵ Barth directly and completely rejects this most confused kind of presupposition when he says that "the creature which conditions God is no longer God's creature, and the God who is conditioned by the creature is no longer God." "If we start from this point we will constantly lose sight of both the reality of God and the reality of the creature."¹⁶ Barth insists that God is a free Lord; no immanent attempt will be able to comprehend His sovereign act. He stresses that while God enters into the closest of relationship with other beings, He does not form such a synthesis, or become so wholly identical, with it as to be thus immanently comprehended.¹⁷ On the other hand, we find that Brunner holds to his chosen-point for criticism as he says:

For mysticism thrives only in 'mystical twilight.' The clear light dissolves it. It lives by the undetermined and the undeterminable. Therefore it escapes from the Word. What is Word, when one has music! What need has one of day, when the twilight is so splendidly suited for dreaming the dream of spirit? Where Word is, there is day-bright clarity ...either mysticism or the Word. 18

Thus, Schleiermacher's unwarranted speculation and artificial abstraction is wholly unacceptable to Brunner and Barth,

15. CD II/1. p.338.

16. Ibid., p.580.

17. Ibid., p.312; cf. Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.153.

18. "Denn Mystik gedeiht nur im 'mystischen Halbdunkel.' Das klare Licht löst sie auf. Sie lebt vom unbestimmten und Unbestimmbaren. Darum flieht sie das Wort. Was ist Wort, wenn man Musik hat! Was braucht man Tag, da das Halbdunkel sich so herrlich dazu eignet, den Traum vom Geist zu träumen! Wo Wort ist, ist taghelle Klarheit...Entweder die Mystik oder das Wort." Mystik, p.5.

who hold that God dwells in unapproachable light; His Lordship transcends the world-whole which He has created. That is why Mackintosh writes:

In short,---and in theology this is unpardonable sin---he makes only what may be called a quantitative difference between man and God, thereby suggesting that the revelation of God in Christ is merely a more excellent way than others, instead of proclaiming that it is the true and only way, all other ways being dross and illusion. Nothing, Barth finds, is more characteristic of Schleiermacher's ultimate attitude than his tendency to make a fetish of 'continuity', and therefore to gloss over man's worst troubles with a veneer of immanentism. The dogma of continuity might be called the real foundation of the more recent European pantheism, consisting as it does in the assertion of the homogeneity and the continuous connexion between all parts of the universe. In the last resort, there is an unbroken line of development from matter to life, from life to mind, from man to God. Thus in religion the measure of all things is man, not the sovereign God who has spoken in His Word. 19

This statement by Mackintosh, one may imagine, is to be applied only to Barth's criticism of the earlier viewpoint of Schleiermacher. The writer would like to point out that the statement quoted above is actually applicable to Brunner's criticism. In Barth's case, it may be right to say that it is Schleiermacher's philosophical approach which he criticizes. One must be reminded that Schleiermacher insists that God (or the concept of God only) is purely transcendent. Then what is this "continuity" which Schleiermacher tends to make? It is obviously difficult to apply such a criticism to his semi-theological approach, or to the feeling of absolute dependence. Barth reminds us that even in Schleiermacher's early years, in his Speeches, he has not treated his doctrines only in a speculative manner:

19. Types of Modern Theology, p.271.

The other one [the other apologetic motive] is, already in Reden and still in Glaubenslehre an attempt though definitely limited, in the direction of a positive proof, in the direction of a demonstration of the logical necessity of the Christian propositions. I say in the direction and more one would not be allowed to say without saying something wrong and entirely 'Unschleiermacherisches.' Schleiermacher has not proved theology, the Christian propositions speculatively, i.e., he has not understood and treated them as propositions to be necessarily derived from the idea of human knowledge. 20

According to Brunner and Barth, God is the Wholly Other One, who can be known only through His self-communication, and through Himself alone; as Brunner says: "The living God is not known through thought, nor through conclusions drawn from the structure of the universe, nor through profound meditation on the nature of the Spirit; He is known through revelation alone."²¹ As Barth says: the knowledge of God does not originate with human capacity to apprehend it, but is given to man by God Himself.²² Obviously this means that "God is known only where He Himself makes His Name known. Apart from this self-manifestation He is unknowable; from our point of view He is remote, inaccessible... it is a knowledge which---in the strict sense of the word---can only be given."²³ Therefore, one cannot apply any immanent,

20. "Das Andere ist, schon in den Reden und noch in der Glaubenslehre ein allerdings bestimmt umschränkter Versuch in der Richtung eines positiven Beweises, in der Richtung des Aufweises der Denknöthwendigkeit der christlichen Sätze. In der Richtung, sage ich, und mehr dürfte man nicht sagen, ohne etwas Verkehrtes und ganz Unschleiermacherisches zu sagen. Schleiermacher hat die Theologie, er hat die christlichen Sätze nicht spekulativ begründet, d.h. er hat sie nicht als notwendig aus der Idee des menschlichen Wissens abzuleitende Sätze aufgefasst und behandelt." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.399.

21. Revelation and Reason, p.44; cf. The Divine-Human Encounter, p.34; The Mediator, p.21; God and Man, p.60. Also: "Either God is the Other One, the wholly Other One, not as a neuter but as a person, or He is not really God; and it is He alone who can disclose His secret." The Word and the World, p.29.

22. CD II/1. p.44.

general, or undifferentiated ideas about God, as though one could know about Him apart from His gracious act of His self-revelation in Christ. Barth says: "The being of God is either known by grace or it is not known at all."²⁴ This conception seems somewhat ecclesiastically dogmatic or aggressively arbitrary in regard to our general way of thinking, but the true meaning of this term "Creator" must not be dissipated away, Barth affirms: "Creator means one who alone exists and everything else only as the work of His will and Word. Creator means: creator ex nihilo." But within the sphere of the ideas possible to us, creatio ex nihilo can appear only as an absurdity."²⁵ Brunner says the same: "As Creator He is the beginning and the ground of all existence, the source of all life,"²⁶ and he explains that the knowledge of the Creator is only possible in a reflective way: "To meet God the Lord means that we acknowledge that we are creatures. It may seem tautological to say: To know God the Creator means to know ourselves as creatures."²⁷ Since "Creator" means that He is the source of all being,²⁸ therefore the knowledge of this Creator-God, in no way, is grounded on the knowledge of creature-man but He is known only by faith. Barth points out the way in which the knowledge of God, as a knowledge of faith, is unlike all other knowledge in focussing

23. Brunner, The Christian Doctrine of God, Dogmatics I. (Transl. by Olive Wyon, London: Lutterworth Press, 1949). p.120. cf. The Word and the World, p.123; The Mediator, pp.211f., 454; 201; Revelation and Reason, p.24.

24. CD II/1. p.27.

25. Ibid., p.76.

26. The Divine Imperative, p.122.

27. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics II. p.53.

28. von Balthasar: "Als Grund alles sonstigen Existierens." s.a. "Wie die Wirklichkeit des Schöpfers darin von aller andern Wirklichkeit verschieden ist, dass er und er allein durch sich selbst und also ursprünglich existiert." op. cit., p.150.

its primary attention upon the living Lord and Creator of cognitive man, who comes from this Creator as a living being even before he has any chance to know Him.²⁹ A God who could be known in any other way than through his own self-revelation, Barth warns, would thereby eo ipso betray Himself as not the only One, and therefore not God, but solely one more principle underlying our human systems and schemes---a principle inevitably identical with man himself.³⁰

Our knowledge of this fact is definitely limited. Since God is the Creator and Lord of all things, He can not be developed by our reason as if He were represented by our extended ideas. Barth writes: "God does not stand under any alien law, any general truth and possibility and presupposition embracing and conditioning and limiting both Himself and the world and man. It would be a futile undertaking to try to measure Him by any such law when answering the question of His right."³¹ Brunner even asserts that, "He is not at our disposal as an object of knowledge. He proves Himself as Lord in the fact that He, He alone, gives the knowledge of Himself, and that man has no power at his own disposal to enable him to acquire this knowledge."³² God is not man's infinite extension of man himself.³³ Thus He is the Creator; man is His creature,³⁴ i.e., God is God, man is man.³⁵

29. CD II/1. pp.21; cf.45, 190, 601.

30. The Knowledge of God and the Service of God, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938), p.20.

31. CD IV/1. p.529.

32. Revelation and Reason, p.24.

33. Camfield, Reformation Old and New, p.61.

34. It is interesting to observe Brunner's view on man: "Man is not loving God who 'first loved' him; yet the 'theological structure of human existence, as it has been created by the Creator, is not annihilated by the hostility of man to the will of the Creator, although it is perverted in its operation." Man in Revolt, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1939), p.105.

Schleiermacher would certainly not deny that God is transcendent, but he does not go any further in this respect. On the other hand, we see that Brunner admits that God is the Creator, which originally means that in His very Being, He is supreme and unique, mysterious and impenetrable. Therefore He absolutely transcends the world.³⁶ Barth also does not agree with Schleiermacher that we ought simply to keep silence about God because He is transcendent. According to Barth: "The Christian doctrine of God has to face and answer questions put to it by the God who confronts man and not by the man who confronts God."³⁷ Brunner points out that "for his [Schleiermacher's] original plan of the doctrine of God is indeed not based upon the Word, the truth of God revealed in Christ, but upon the romantico-mystical concepts of religion."³⁸

As Schleiermacher develops his ideas in this area, God is reflected or termed as Infinite; man is finite. Brunner and Barth promptly reject this kind of relativized appellation. Camfield, taking a page from Barth, points out how the concept of infinity per se denotes a negative, since it bespeaks a God not limited by space and time. Man, of course, is finite rather than infinite; but how is such a statement to tell us anything really penetrating about God, even if we add that we are limited

35. Barth: "The frontier is a real one. On the one side there is God in His glory as Creator and Lord, and also in the majesty of His holiness and righteousness. And on the other side there is man, not merely the creature, but the sinner, the one who exists in the flesh and who in the flesh is in opposition to Him." CD IV/1. p.82.

36. cf. Brunner, The Philosophy of Religion, p.16; Revelation and Reason, p.92.

37. CD II/1. p.464.

38. "Denn sein ursprünglicher Plan der Gotteslehre ist ja gar nicht auf die in Christus offenbarte Gotteswahrheit aufgebaut, nicht auf das Wort, sondern auf den romantisch-mystischen Religionsbegriff." Mystik, p.140.

in an infinite way?³⁹ Barth himself derides this empty chain of thought which is, at bottom, self-deceptive. If man is truly alone, he is not occupied with God at all, but only with himself. He is absolutizing his own being and nature and projecting them into an infinite reflection of his own vainglory. Such thought is, to Barth, a mere game which cannot possibly help us arrive at any closer knowledge or understanding of God.⁴⁰

God is free from all limits imposed on Him, even such a negative one---Infinite. He is beyond the process of our thinking: "God alone is the absolute mystery."⁴¹ Therefore, eventually it is self-deceptive when man attempts to know God by describing his own pious soul. He is not to be identified with the content of the soul;⁴² He is rather the Absolute One, not vice versa, lest He become "the reflection of creaturely unities."⁴³ He must be the sovereign Lord, or He is no Lord; He is not forced to give His glory to another.⁴⁴

According to Schleiermacher, as Brunner puts it: "The point of contact of the absolute and the I in consciousness, therefore, is feeling."⁴⁵ "There indeed feeling is the presupposition of all consciousness, it is the absolute itself, therefore it cannot be exposed."⁴⁶ In this direction, as Barth sees,

39. Reformation Old and New, p.61.

40. CD II/1. p.71.

41. Brunner, Revelation and Reason, p.92; cf. "All is yours, but ye are God's. Of all the trees in the garden ye shall eat, but from this one tree ye shall not eat. All is in subjection to us---that is the concept of the world---save one thing only, God Himself. All things can become object of our thought and be fitted by us into a system, save one thing only, God Himself." God and Man, p.58.

42. The Theology of Crisis, p.32. cf. "He should exhibit in its peculiarity what lies beyond the Object-Subject antithesis, the encounter between the self-revealing God and the man who, because of this revelation of God, surrenders himself. Hence his 'subject'---not his thinking about it---lies beyond what can be comprehended by means of Object-Subject correlation." The Divine-Human Encounter, p.58.

Schleiermacher only attempts "to understand God decisively from man instead of man decisively from God."⁴⁷ According to Brunner and Barth: man's feeling, in no way, can be identified with the existence of God. The important aspect involved here is that in the relation between God and man, the "unconditional priority"⁴⁸ belongs to Him. As Barth says: "What must be said is that the self-declaration of God is true and real, which means that God Himself is God,"⁴⁹ i.e., He is in Himself. "He is the only one of His kind."⁵⁰ God possesses absolute freedom; He is free from all natural necessities, out of His good-pleasure, though He could grant co-existence with man's feeling without falling into contradiction of Himself,⁵¹ but this could not at all mean that feeling is defined as co-existent with God or corresponding to the existence of the gracious God who speaks to man in His Word, Barth says: "Man who hears, as the object of the purpose of God who speaks, is included in the concept of the Word of God as a factual, but not as an essential necessity." He is not co-existent in it, like Schleiermacher's God in the feeling of absolute dependence. It is God's free grace that He is co-existent in it as a factual necessity.⁵² Brunner says that "God's being is the being of the Lord who posits everything and is not posited."⁵³ It is simply because God must be primary, not secondary; and

43. CD II/1. p.448.

44. Isaiah 48:11.

45. "Der Berührungspunkt des Absoluten und des Ich im Bewusstseins ist also das Gefühl." Mystik, p.59.

46. Brunner, "'Das' Gefühl ist ja dort Voraussetzung alles Bewusstseins, es ist das Absolute selbst, es kann also nicht 'aussetzen'." Ibid., p.219.

47. CD II/2. p.541.

48. Brunner, The Divine-Human Encounter, p.34.

49. CD II/1. p.670.

50. Ibid., p.442.

51. Ibid., p.463.

52. CD I/1. p.159.

53. Christianity and Civilization, I. p.19.

feeling must therefore be secondary, not primary.⁵⁴ Schleiermacher is wrong for he holds that, "in the human spirit itself and in the nature of man itself, this God-consciousness is grounded."⁵⁵

To return to the same point: God must be the Lord of all things; they are all but His creatures.⁵⁶ Tautologically, neither nature nor the process of nature is to be identified with Him or regarded as co-existent with Him or mistaken for His presence in it or for His movement. Thus Schleiermacher is actually talking about nature and man, not God.⁵⁷ It is generally a way which religion and philosophy take to seek the "becoming one" (Einswerden) of the finite and the Absolute; or of God and the soul.⁵⁸ They start from man and return to man. As Brunner says that "inasmuch as the world unfolds itself to him, it is his thinking self which unfolds itself therein."⁵⁹ And Barth points

54. Barth explains this: "If we apply it to what in our terminology we call the doctrine of the Word of God, it would mean that real knowledge of the Word of God is the realization of a special potentiality of knowledge proper to man as such. If we affirm this statement, then we must acquiesce in the answer to the question of ability, with which we are here occupied, being given from an anthropological point of view, where it is a matter of secondary importance." CD I/1. p.220.

55. Brunner, "Im Menschengestalt selbst, im Wesen des Menschen selbst ist jenes Gottesbewusstsein begründet." *Mystik*, p.173. cf. Barth, "The modernist view against which we have to fix our limits goes back to the Renaissance and particularly to the Renaissance philosopher Cartesius with his proof of God from man's certainty of himself." CD I/1. p.222.

56. Barth: "He is not at any point limited or determined by them, but at every point He limits and determines them. He is the 'King of kings' as their true Creator and Preserver or as their righteous Judge. Thus none of them can escape Him, but all must serve Him and will definitely serve Him in one way or another." CD II/1. p.538.

57. Barth questions: "When we have established this limited and defined condition of ours, have we really said anything about God? Have we not again said something about ourselves, even if only negatively? Have we not simply heightened or deepened the concept of reality which is distinct from God, which really tells

out that this psychological orientation can arise only when we make an arbitrary attempt to force the being of God to correspond to and conform with the being of man. God may not be regarded simply as the absolute human expression. But the empty formalism of such reasoning is evident when one recalls a point made earlier: viz., that no matter what we say about feeling, knowing, and willing generally, nothing is really declared about God.⁶⁰ In such an event we deal, not with God, but basically only with ourselves;⁶¹ because the idea we think we have of God, as the object of our most intimate feeling, is but the idea we have of the world and of man, our own hypostatization of our thought and reflection and language.⁶² Our reason, feeling, or experience cannot reach God. It is significant to be reminded here that both Brunner and Barth hold that there is no way to God, but only a way from God to man. That is His Word, in which man must believe; no theory of reflection can be valid to reach Him. Did Schleiermacher pick up the wrong end of the stick?⁶³ For he thinks that his speculative theory of reflection can produce a kind of knowledge for the apprehension of the universe behind which God somehow stands. Brunner demolishes his theory by saying: "Reflection is the essence of the Fichtean I

us nothing about God? For if the finite is in fact limited by the infinite, the opposite inevitably holds good too." Ibid., p.466.

58. Mystik, p.3; cf. "For all philosophical systems presuppose that man is in his inmost nature, one with God." God and Man, p.10.

59. God and Man, p.47.

60. CD II/1, p.338.

61. Ibid., p.71.

62. Ibid., p.228.

63. Cushman, Barth's attack upon Cartesianism and the Future in Theology, The Journal of Religion, (XXXVI. no.4. Oct. 1956), p.215.

and out of this reflection arises all objectivity including the knowledge about this knowledge. The I is the basis of all being."⁶⁴

The knowledge of God actually means to listen to His Word, not to strive to be united with Him in our soul.⁶⁵ In fact, Brunner even attacks Schleiermacher's earlier thought in his Speeches which is romantic enough to strive for the unity with the Universe: "Above all, we may point out here the only too well known analogy of religious experience to sexual experience."⁶⁶ Brunner further discusses the characteristics of mysticism when he says:

It is always the tendency to a certain inner state, but not always to God. Its goal is always the removal of the limitation of the I, the self, the soul; it is the removal of the limitations which delimit the human I --- from where? From God, from the Universe, from the unconditional or the absolute, from the unity beyond all antitheses. ⁶⁷

As Barth says with reference to Schleiermacher's discovery of the religious reality in man which is generally demonstrable, and his application of this reality to the interpretation of Christianity:

64. "Reflexion is das Wesen des Fichteschen Ich und aus dieser Reflexion entsteht alle Objektivität, samt dem Wissen über dieses Wissen. Das Ich -- der Urgrund alles Seins -- ist." Mystik, pp.114f. cf. p.220.

65. cf. Ibid., p.52.

66. "Vor allem wäre hier die nur allzubekannte Analogie des religiösen mit dem sexuellen Erlebnis zu nennen." Ibid., p.53.

67. "Sie ist immer die Tendenz auf eine gewisse innere Zuständlichkeit hin, aber nicht immer auf einen Gott hin. Ihr Ziel ist immer die Entschränkung des Ich, des Selbst, der Seele, die Beseitigung der Grenzen, die das menschliche Ich abgrenzen --wo- von? Von Gott, vom All, vom Unbedingten oder Absoluten, von der Einheit jenseits aller Gegensätze." Ibid., p.369.

It is...Schleiermacher who, for the first time, quite fundamentally connects this newly-discovered and independent reality of religion with a coresponding possibility generally demonstrable on anthropological grounds, and who for the first time quite fundamentally undertakes to interpret Christianity itself in the form of a concretely historical analysis of human existence along the lines of a general doctrine of man: 1. Man's meeting with God to be regarded as a human religious experience historically and psychologically fixable; and 2. This experience to be regarded as the realization of a religious potentiality in man generally demonstrable. 68

As Brunner sees it, the genuine Christian outlook can only be diluted with the mystical feeling:

This relativism is the dim-light, in which all sharp contrasts disappear, especially those which are the characteristics of Christian faith. But this knowledge of the abolition of all contrasts is grounded in a consciousness which in itself is not knowledge: in the consciousness of that absolute unity or identity in 'feeling.' The subjective correlation of that absolute point of identity is the mystical feeling, in which the basic contrast of subject and object is abolished, therefore in which 'somehow' the absolute divinity and the I are identical. 69

Brunner is conscious of the fact that one must not follow the basic ideas of mysticism so that by the inward-look of the soul, the deepest self and God are united in one, i.e., the higher self-consciousness identified as God-consciousness where he says: "God-consciousness is just another name so often substituted for the conception of the 'higher self-consciousness.'"⁷⁰

68. CD I/1. p.219.

69. "Dieser Relativismus ist das Dämmerlicht, in dem alle harten Gegensätze verschwinden, insbesondere jene, die das Charakteristische des christlichen Glaubens sind. Dieses Wissen um die Aufhebung aller Gegensätze aber gründet in einem Bewusstsein, das selbst kein Wissen ist: im Bewusstsein jener absoluten Einheit oder Identität, im 'Gefühl.' Das subjektive Korrelat jenes absoluten Identitätspunktes ist das mystische Gefühl, in dem der Grundgegensatz, der von Objekt und Subjekt, aufgehoben ist, in dem also 'irgendwie' das absolute Göttliche und das Ich identisch sind." Mystik, p.329.

Again: "Mysticism always deals with the soul, not with God."⁷¹
And still further:

But the dangerous and corrupting force of mysticism is the assertion of its possession of God. The desire for God tempts it to obtain the fellowship with God even deification surreptitiously. It knows a secret way to God; it teaches to go this way. It is always the human soul which is on the way. From it the movement proceeds as far as there is a movement at all, as far as the unity is not asserted as already existing. 72

Thus, Schleiermacher is criticized by Brunner and Barth for seeking a deep and abiding continuity between the human and the divine via his mystical feeling which tends to break through the limits by its immediateness. There subject is approximated to object, and object subject; Creator to creature, and vice versa. Unceasingly Brunner continues to criticize this religion of immanence:

It knows of God only so far as it knows of itself. God confronts it not as a Judge; not as its goal; not as its content which transcends and disturbs the empirical as the ultimate reality. For 'we only have a concept of God in so far as we are God, i.e., have Him in us.' God does not confront the religious state as the other one, but dissolves in it. 73

70. "Gottesbewusstsein ist nur ein anderer name für den so oft an seine Stelle gesetzten begriff 'höheres Selbstbewusstsein.'" Ibid., p.179. cf. pp.186, 275.

71. "Mystik hat es immer zu tun mit der Seele, aber nicht immer mit Gott." Ibid., p.368.

72. "Aber das Gefährliche und Verderbliche der Mystik ist die Behauptung ihres Gottbesitzes. Die Gottessehnsucht verleitet dazu, sich die Gottesgemeinschaft, ja die Vergottung zu erschleichen...Sie weiss einen heimlichen Weg zu Gott, sie leitet an, ihn zu gehen; es ist immer die menschliche Seele, die auf dem Weg ist, von wo die Bewegung ausgeht, sofern überhaupt Bewegung ist, sofern nicht die Einheit als schon seiend behauptet wird." Ibid., pp.395f.

73. "Sie weiss von Gott nur sofern als sie von sich selbst weiss; Gott steht ihr nicht als Richter, nicht als ihr Ziel, als ihr, das Empirische transzendierender und beunruhigender Inhalt, als das eigentlich Gemeinte gegenüber. Denn 'wir haben nur insofern einen Begriff von ihm, als wir Gott sind, d.h. ihn in uns haben.' Gott steht nicht dem religiösen Zustand als der andere gegenüber, sondern geht in ihm auf." Ibid., p.179.

And he points out that "the God of this piety is merely a god of religion, but not the Creator of heaven and earth, not He who redeems [people] from the border of hell and death."⁷⁴

Thus Schleiermacher's doctrine of religious feeling is regarded as wholly immanent; it is interiorising (Verinnerlichen); it implies no crisis and no transcendence. As Brunner says:

This unbroken, non-dialectical positive conception of religion---or thus, according to Schleiermacher's meaning: of faith---is possible on the ground that religious feeling as a pure state is bare of all self-critical function. There is no intrusion in it, because there is no reaching out of itself. Religion does not transcend itself, it does not mean something else than itself; it means itself alone. This is religionism, the religion which sets itself as its goal; therefore it gratifies itself alone. ⁷⁵

In this line of thought, Barth points out that the transcendental object of theology is thus transformed into the immanent sphere of the self-interpretation of man:

In accordance with the increasingly definite demands of the scientific consciousness since the Renaissance, to transfer the object of theology from a Beyond which genuinely confronted man's position to the sphere of man himself. This object need not, but it could be thought of as embraced and conditioned by the general truths of man. So an attempt could be made to regard it or the possibility of it as lying within the self-interpretation of man.⁷⁶

74. "Der Gott dieser Frömmigkeit ist ein blosser Religionsgott, nicht aber der Schöpfer Himmels und der Erde, nicht der, der erlöst aus den Banden der Hölle und des Todes." *Ibid.*, p.185.

75. "Diese ungebrochen, undialektisch positive Auffassung der Religion -- oder also, nach Schleiermachers Meinung: des Glaubens -- ist dadurch möglich, dass das religiöse Gefühl als reine Zuständlichkeit jeder selbstkritischen funktion bar ist. Es ist keine Beunruhigung in ihr, weil kein über sich Hinausgreifen. Religion transzendiert sich nicht selbst, sie meint nicht etwas Anderes als sich; sie meint sich selbst. Das ist der Religionismus, die Religion, die sich selbst als ihr Ziel setzt, die sich darum selbst genießt." *Ibid.*, pp.178f.

76. CD I/1. p.219.

Faith in the Word of God is totally different, it relies on or points to something outside of a natural man, like an arrow shot out in a direction. Brunner says:

...in it only! God Himself speaks His Word which is identical with the word of the Scripture. Its [faith's] essence is just this, that it points to something which is not itself. Therefore, above all, it is the crisis of all religion, the non-self-sufficiency of religion, the opposition to religionism which identifies redemption with religion.⁷⁷

He explains that our relationship to God is grounded in the divine Word which is a mystery to us.

For the God who speaks to me, is He who himself to me is an unknown, absolute mystery. He is the Creator, over whose thought I would have nothing to say from my viewpoint. That the relationship to God is grounded in the divine Word means that we men are not God, we know Him not out of ourselves, and are even according to our deepest nature not continuous with God. The Word of God means that there is no way from us to God, but only from God to us. ⁷⁸

Therefore, to speak of the knowledge of God in this manner is actually to admit that between God and man there is an impassable gulf, a definite non-transgressable limit. Brunner writes that "the knowledge of God as communication from God is what characterizes man as finite creature. Only in that he is dependent

77. "...in ihm allein! -- Gott selbst sein Wort redet, das identisch ist mit dem Wort der Schrift. Sein Wesen ist eben dies, dass er auf etwas zielt, was er selbst nicht ist. Er ist darum vor allem auch die Krisis aller Religion, das Nicht-sich-selbst-Genügen der Religion, der Gegensatz zum Religionismus, der Erlösung mit Religion identifiziert." *Mystik*, p.192.

78. "Denn der Gott, der mich anspricht, ist der, der mir selbst unbekannt, schlechterdings Geheimnis ist. Es ist der Schöpfer, über dessen Gedanken ich von mir aus nichts zu sagen habe. Dass das Gottesverhältnis auf göttliches Wort begründet ist, heisst, dass wir Menschen nicht Gott sind, aus uns Gott nicht kennen und auch nach unserem tiefsten Wesen nicht 'mit Gott kontinuierlich' sind. Es gibt -- das bedeutet Wort Gottes -- keinen Weg von uns aus zu Gott, sondern nur von Gott aus zu uns." *Ibid.*, p.398; cf. *Philosophie und Offenbarung*, p.12.

upon hearing; he becomes aware of the border-line between himself and the Creator, he acknowledges his 'not-being God'.⁷⁹ This means that man must not be too confident of his own religious instinct lest he merely interiorizes his empty, objectless theoretical knowledge of God.

It is obviously seen that Brunner here simply takes the opposite position of Schleiermacher's that he must renounce the self-sufficiency of his self-consciousness and only rely on the Word of God as coming from the outside, not from the inside of the soul, --- the immediateness of the static feeling. As Brunner says:

But the Word, the meaning which is given and communicated to man, the meaning which comes to him from outside, not from inside, from the incidental happening, not the continuous being, which really comes to him, not from him, the Word as claim and revelation pulls him out of his illusions about God and his loneliness of thought. ⁸⁰

Thus, faith in the Word of God actually means that in spite of the miserable situation of our rejected existence, the absolute separation between God and us,⁸¹ against all experience, there stands our faith---against all results of illusions, God can only be believed.⁸² On the other hand, one can see that Brunner has also pointed out that "man in the depth of his soul is not good, not divine, and above all not God. We know this only

79. "Wissen von Gott als Mitteilung von Gott aus: das charakterisiert den Menschen als endliches Geschöpf. Erst dadurch, dass er auf das Hören angewiesen ist, erkennt er die Grenze zwischen sich und dem Schöpfer, anerkennt er sein Nichtgottsein." Mystik, p.93.

80. "Das Wort aber, der dem Menschen mitgeteilte, gegebene Sinn, der ihm von aussen, nicht von innen, aus dem Zufällig-Geschehenden, nicht aus dem Ewig-Seienden zukommt, der wirklich auf ihn zukommt, nicht aus ihm herauskommt, das Wort als Anspruch und Offenbarung reisst ihn heraus aus seinem Gott-Wahn und aus seiner Denkeinsamkeit. Ibid., p.93.

81. cf. CD I/1. p.227.

82. cf. Mystik, pp.188f.

through the revelation of God in His Word, only through Jesus Christ."⁸³

Therefore, the mystic is wrong because he tries to delimit all by the removal of all limitations and think out a way in which the human can reach to the divine or cause the divine to be united with our soul. In doing so, he is seeking an unbroken continuity or an eternal principle as his theory of approximation. On the contrary, according to Brunner: the Word of God is unfathomable and irrational in this aspect. Human reason alone cannot understand Him. He cannot be cleverly conceived or analysed into thought; He cannot be vaguely integrated into human consciousness. Therefore, our religious experience cannot identify its co-existence with Him. What Brunner describes as our "self-directed effort of thought and interiorization"⁸⁴ cannot make Him become a part of us through the divination of our immediate feeling. Brunner defends the absoluteness of the self-differentiation and self-authentication of God as but evidence of His unconditional claim to lordship over all of human life, and of His will and its absolute exclusion of any tendencies which would tend in any manner to usurp His sovereignty. The Biblical term for the divine self-affirmation is "the holiness of God."⁸⁵

Consequently, Schleiermacher's imagination is but an illusion; his feeling can only derive ideas of God, not God. Brunner says that "the God whom we should find in the depths of our soul or mind, would not be Himself...because the thought of God is reached...from the human Ego."⁸⁶ Barth pays little attention to

83. "Dass der Mensch auch im tiefsten Grund seiner Seele nicht gut, nicht göttlich, und vor allem nicht Gott ist: das wissen wir nur durch die Offenbarung Gottes in seinem Wort, nur durch Jesus Christus." *Ibid.*, p.397.

84. *The Mediator*, p.212.

85. *Ibid.*, p.460.

86. *The Word and the World*, pp.29f; cf. *The Mediator*, p.268.

Brunner's criticism of Schleiermacher as a mystic, but he agrees with him that this kind of illusory conception means eventually depending on nothing, but hanging in the air; it cannot even be true to our own natural or general knowledge and the human honesty of our being is thus also denied.⁸⁷

Brunner and Barth correct this point of illusory continuity by pointing out that the true spiritual relationship of man and God is this: "Our 'I' is grounded in the divine address, it is an answer to this calling."⁸⁸ McConnachie explains that, according to Barth, God's original stance in re His creation is a personal stance best expressed by the term "Word." That is, by this God reveals His personal nature, always in the address of a Thou to an I (these being the two chief spiritual realities in life) which, in turn, is understood only in relation to the Thou. In the final analysis, man's spiritual relation to God is the relation of the true Thou to the true I.⁸⁹ Does Schleiermacher pay attention to this calling of the Word? No! According to Brunner: "Not only where he escapes from the Word but also where he uses it, it appears that the Word is strange and unknown to him. The Word which is one and the all of faith, without which he falls into nothing like the mountainer whose rope, on which he hangs over the precipice, breaks."⁹⁰ Is this situation described here not true to Schleiermacher's interpretation of one's religious consciousness? According to Brunner and Barth, consciousness is but immanent and subjectivistic: it is the outcome of

87. CD II/1. pp.71f.

88. "Unser Ich ist gegründet im göttlichen Du-sagen, es ist Ant-wort auf diese Berufung." Mystik, p.97.

89. Reformation Issues To-day, Reformation Old and New, p.109.

90. "Nicht nur da, wo er das Wort flieht, sondern auch da, wo er es braucht, erweist es sich, dass ihm das Wort fremd und unbekannt ist, das des Glaubens Ein und Alles ist, ohne das er ins Nichts stürzt wie der Bergsteiger, dem das Seil zerreisst, an dem er über dem Abgrund hängt." Mystik, p.119.

the 'I.' Subjectivization of one's consciousness---i.e., the contemplation of the soul means that one eventually will get nowhere. Brunner says that "the localization of religion and revelation in feeling means its complete subjectivization."⁹¹ Barth holds also that one's feeling of dependence cannot presuppose a knowledge of the Absolute.⁹²

Therefore, concerning Schleiermacher's propositions of faith, Brunner says: "Rightly understood in Schleiermacher's sense, they have no content of knowledge at all. They do not mean what they say. They say 'the attributes of God,' but they mean 'human states.'"⁹³ In Schleiermacher's thinking, all humanly distinguishable attributes of the God whose being receives exhaustive definition in the concept of causality denote, not something distinctive in God Himself, but rather something distinctive about the manner in which we relate to Him our pure feeling of dependence at various points along the road of our religious self-consciousness.⁹⁴ The difficulty involved here,

91. "Die Lokalisierung der Religion und Offenbarung im Gefühl bedeutet ihre völlige Subjektivierung." *Ibid.*, p.174.

92. KD III/3. p.132.

93. "Sie haben, recht, d.h. im Sinn Schleiermachers verstanden, auch gar keinen Erkenntnisinhalt. Sie meinen nicht was sie sagen. Sie sagen 'Gottes Eigenschaften', aber sie meinen 'menschliche Zustände.'" *Mystik*, p.117.

94. cf. *Christian Faith*, s50; CD II/1. p.327; cf. "We have seen how Schleiermacher tried to interpret the attributes of God as an objectification of the individual aspects of the religious self-consciousness. According to him there results from this consciousness itself (apart from the antithesis of sin and grace) God's eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience. From the religious consciousness in antithesis (i.e. the consciousness of sin) there results God's holiness and justice. And from the religious consciousness of a resolution of this disharmony (the consciousness of grace) there results God's love and wisdom." *Ibid.*, p.338.

according to McConnachie's explanation of the modernist view, is that it pictures each man as being in touch with God at the centre of his own personality, and therefore as being able to pass from the known (experience) to the unknown (God) and find peace by his own effort in the context of his own religious experience.⁹⁵ Thus, according to this kind of interpretation, God becomes the object of speculation or human sentiment. As Brunner says: "God becomes integrated into human thought; He becomes part of a great whole, subordinate to a higher authority ---the caricature of God."⁹⁶ And he points out that the result is completely different from the Biblical and the Reformers' witness---, "...omniscience, which is, e.g., decisive for the personal concept of God is diluted to a concept of absolute animation of the divine omnipotence."⁹⁷

In this situation, man only contemplates;⁹⁸ he is alone, there is no personal relationship with God for his language and thought does not participate in a dialogue,⁹⁹ but appears as a soliloquy which is really Schleiermacher's theology.¹⁰⁰ Similarly Barth writes: "Modernist thought hears man answer without any one having called him. It hears him talk to himself."¹⁰¹ God interpreted in this sense, is no living Lord; nor is there any

95. Reformation Issues To-day, Reformation Old and New, p.107.

96. "Gott wird dem menschlichen Denken eingeordnet, er wird zum Teil eines grösseren Ganzen, zum untergebenen einer höheren Autorität -- zum Spottbild Gottes." Mystik, p.102.

97. "...die Allwissenshaft z.B., die für den persönlichen Gottesbegriff entscheidend ist, zum Begriff der 'absoluten Lebendigkeit der göttlichen Allmacht' verdünnt wird." Ibid., p.338.

98. Barth: "It is the quiet religious possession. It is the contemplation of the universe and the creative power of the individual feeling which gropes after it in its nameless and formless and unrealised oneness." CD I/l. p.324.

99. Mystik, p.211.

100. Ibid., p.398.

101. CD I/l. p.68.

communication or personal fellowship between God and man. Theology, when elaborated in this manner, will not provide any basis for the Word of God of revelation, and is therefore but a description of the contemplation of a lonely soul. Brunner depicts the situation for us: "Its wings are cut; the bow which shoots the arrow of desire to another shore is broken, the man is referred to himself, to his own self-consciousness."¹⁰² Barth corrects this view when he says that man is not left all by his loneliness (as mystical theology would ultimately have us believe), but rather stands before God and God before him in the miracle of faith and revelation; and man then may know God and conceive of Him even in all His inconceivability.¹⁰³

Therefore, the divine command is never taken seriously, for Schleiermacher's God never speaks to or condemns anybody. The First Commandment means nothing to him: "There is no First Commandment for Schleiermacher and there can never be, if there were, his whole system the philosophical as well as the theological would collapse (Brunner)."¹⁰⁴ Barth comments at this point with a conclusive and definitive statement:

Schleiermacher speaks forcefully of God when he describes Him as the source of the absolute dependence of our consciousness, and therefore not only the ground of all religion, but at the same time and as such the ulterior ground of our whole self-consciousness, the mysterious centre of our intelligent and active existence. Schleiermacher more plainly perhaps than any of his spiritual confrères knows how superfluous is a particular concept of God to describe

102. "Die Flügel sind ihr beschnitten, der Bogen, der den Pfeil der Sehnsucht nach dem anderen Ufer schiesst, ist zerbrochen, der Mensch ist auf sich selbst, auf sein Eigenes, sein Selbst-bewusstsein gewiesen." Mystik, p.179.

103. CD II/1. p.197.

104. "Gibt es für Schleiermacher kein erstes Gebot, kann es, darf es keines geben, wenn nicht sein ganzes System, das philosophische wie das theologische, zusammenstürzen soll." Mystik, pp.153f; cf. p.157.

the moving power of spirit and nature, and above all of man as such. In fact, Schleiermacher takes so little account of a force moving us from outside, and above all self-moved, that he purposed to give his system a final form in which it would be a clear presentation of the self-motivated Christian-religious self-consciousness as such: an undertaking which---in view of the instruction it would have give us we can only say---unfortunately his death prevented from further prosecution. 105

2. The Creator-Lord of nature vs. the speculative illusion of continuity.

Schleiermacher, as an unsound rationalist, wishes to fill in his empty concept of God; he has to speculate on the world with some general contents of nature. Since the concept of God, according to the result of his method of reflection, consequently is but an empty proposition of the vague Infinite, he must now direct his attention to the world-whole and apply a kind of "semi-pantheistic philosophy"¹⁰⁶ to modify his conception of a de-personalized God as if God exists with the framework of the orders of nature and as if there is an organic connection in the relationship between God and the world-whole. Thus, God is necessarily dependent on the world as it is on Him.¹⁰⁷ But we see that Brunner demolishes his speculative illusion by saying

105. CD II/1. p.270.

106. Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, p.41.

107. Brunner: "Since this consciousness [God-consciousness] is no longer a moment of man's return and answer to God's approach, this original relation to God, having lost its connexion with selfhood, becomes an impersonal unspiritual passive impression of God, a givenness of God in feeling; in a word, a mystical feeling in which man seeks identification with God and the world." God and Man, p.170; Iwand: "Gott und Welt nicht zu trennen und die Ethik zu erlösen aus der Beziehungslosigkeit, in die sie durch jede Trennung von Natürlichem und Geistigem geraten muss." Schleiermacher als Ethiker, Evangelische Theologie, 11. Jahrgang, Heft 2. August 1951. p.50.

that "we don't know Him through the world, but we know Him as the One who comes into the world."¹⁰⁸ Barth fundamentally holds the same position: "His [God's] relation to the world cannot on any account be understood and interpreted as a combination, amalgamation or identification of God with the world."¹⁰⁹

In this line of thought, it is significant to point out that the purpose of Schleiermacher's deification of nature is actually to bring God down to the level of nature. That is why his doctrine of creation, being pressed along this line, is un-Christian. Because his doctrine of creation and preservation is thus mixed,¹¹⁰ God, the Creator, and His creation are interpreted in no Christian sense. Brunner says: "that the author of the Glaubenslehre does not teach creation in the Christian sense of the word is clear to anyone, as soon as he has read the statement 'all that God knows exists' and as soon as he understands the argument of s54,2, where it is written that no distinction may be drawn between the actual and the possible in God."¹¹¹ On the other hand, Brunner assures us that the God of Christian faith is the Living God who, having created the natural order, is assuredly its Lord, and not the God postulated by Schleiermacher as One whose actions are identical with natural processes and phenomena.¹¹² This Creator-Lord disposes freely of the creature, who therefore most assuredly does not bind Him. God

108. The Theology of Crisis, p.32.

109. CD II/1. p.446.

110. Mystik, p.340.

111. "Dass der Verfasser der Glaubenslehre keine Schöpfung im christlichen Sinne lehrt, ist schon dem klar, der nur erst den Satz gelesen hat 'alles ist, was Gott weiss' und die Abhandlung des s54,2 versteht, wo es heisst, dass zwischen Wirklichem und Möglichem in Gott nicht dürfe unterschieden werden." Mystik, p.339.

112. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II, p.188.

may consider or disregard, preserve or terminate the course of the nature which He has brought into being, entirely as He wills. The Bible, in teaching the divine freedom of God from natural processes, stresses the non-identity of the divine will with the causality of nature, and thus reinforces His sovereignty as absolute Lord and Living God.¹¹³

Barth, quite similarly affirms, at this point, that God is the absolutely free Lord. He first asks: "As the living God ---as distinct from all the godheads of philosophies and religions---is He not free and able to justify Himself?"¹¹⁴ Of course such a divine freedom cannot be conditionally confined or even adequately defined. God is infinite, exalted, absolute, active, impassable---yes, all this; He is transcendent Lord. But He is also One who loves freely in His own freedom, and who cannot possibly be described as His own prisoner. Yet He also embraces the opposites of all these concepts even while free from them. This world which he has created is a reality entirely distinct from Himself, yet affirmed as His world because willed by Him. He may be, and is, God in both a relative and an absolute way, in both a humble and an exalted fashion; actively yet passively, transcendentally yet immanently; and of course, ultimately, divine yet also human.¹¹⁵

Barth feels that Schleiermacher understands too little of all this in his one-sided approach to God's true majesty and free will. It is true that the sin of mankind affects and offends God by its very absurdity; but Schleiermacher does not see that God does all this in and because of His high majesty as Creator and Lord (even though he rightfully affirms that we cannot encroach upon Him) even throughout all of His merciful dealings toward us.

113. The Christian Doctrine of God, Dogmatics, I. p.250; cf. Dogmatics, II. p.161.

114. CD IV/1. p.567.

115. ibid., p.187; cf. pp.214f.

"He does not will to be God, high and majestic, without us who have fallen victim to it."¹¹⁶ The crux of distinction here lies in the realization that God's omnipotence is that of a truly free love which, as such, cannot be equated with any system or order of His works, and which is not to be abstracted in such fashion if we are seriously and credibly to understand those divine works in all clarity as the manifestations, not merely of God's activity, but of God Himself.¹¹⁷

The core of Barth's criticism of Schleiermacher in this respect is: "God is His own prisoner because the identity of His attributes is understood only as something single (in Schleiermacher as the source of the utter sense of dependence, itself without utterance or act)."¹¹⁸ Thus, Barth's criticism of him is for his imprisonment of God within His own attributes. In this respect, Löffler compares Schleiermacher with Bultmann:

Bultmann has said often enough that he did not mean to dissolve this significance of the activity of God. The question is only whether he can escape this consequence, if he took over an epistemological proposition which excludes all objective activity of God outside my existence. The epistemological proposition which proceeds from a separation between objective and non-objective being which we have met in Schleiermacher as well as in Bultmann, does not originate only from Schleiermacher. It is the basic proposition of idealism as such which could be traced back to Kant. ¹¹⁹

To criticize Schleiermacher's idea of God, one must not

116. *Ibid.*, p.411.

117. *CD II/1*, p.531.

118. *Ibid.*, p.530.

119. "Dass Bultmann diese Bedeutung des Handelns Gottes nicht auflösen wollte, hat er selbst oft genug gesagt. Die Frage ist nur, ob er dieser Konsequenz entgehen kann, wenn er einen erkenntnistheoretischen Ansatz übernimmt, der alles gegenständliche Handeln Gottes ausserhalb meiner Existenz ausschliesst. Der erkenntnistheoretische Ansatz, den wie bei Schleiermacher wie bei Bultmann angetroffen haben, der von einer Trennung zwischen gegenständlichem und nicht-gegenständlichem Sein ausgeht, stammt nicht erst von Schleiermacher. Er ist überhaupt der idealistische

go too far from this point. One must be reminded that Schleiermacher, too, admits the impossibility of adequately describing the divine in human terms. Consequently, Schleiermacher's attention is centralized on man. As Löffler puts it: "All comprehension of God outside the self-consciousness is only symbolically possible, indeed, but as the reflection of self-consciousness";¹²⁰ and Barth adds: "It was at least understandable that Schleiermacher preferred simple silence about the concept of the personality of God."¹²¹ Barth virtually recognizes his interest in man could be used as one of the starting points in elaboration of a theology when he says: "This shifting of interest does not necessarily mean: man without God, man in his own world; it could also mean: man in the presence of God, his act over against God's act. It is legitimate for theology to build up from that point."¹²²

But the decisive point in the argument is that Schleiermacher neglects the fact that this God is a living and personal God, the Creator-Lord who is alive and active.¹²³ As Brunner says in opposition to him: "The Christian faith is anti-mystical, because it takes seriously the knowledge that God is a personal will. He is the will of the absolute, the unconditionally free, the sovereign Creator and Lord."¹²⁴ He also denies Schleiermacher's assertion that the world is in correlation to God, like

Grundansatz und geht auf Kant zurück." Selbstbewusstsein und Selbstverständnis als theologische Prinzipien bei Schleiermacher und Bultmann, Kerygma und Dogma, (Zeitschrift für theologische Forschung und kirchliche Lehre). 2 Jahrgang, Heft 4, Oct, 1956), p.313.

120. "Alles Erfassen Gottes ausserhalb des Selbstbewusstseins ist nur symbolisch möglich, und zwar als Reflektion des Selbstbewusstseins." Ibid., p.307.

121. CD I/1. p.411.

122. "Diese Verschiebung des Interesses brauchte nicht notwendig zu bedeuten: der Mensch ohne Gott, der Mensch in seiner eigenen Welt. Es konnte auch bedeuten: der Mensch im Angesichte Gottes, sein Tun dem Tun Gottes gegenüber. Echte, rechte Theologie konnte von da aus aufgebaut werden." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.411.

some terrestrial Left to God's celestial Right. Rather, the God-world relationship is one-sided, in that the world derives from God its Source, and is determined by Him, not vice versa.¹²⁵ "The world does not exist as His alter ego, as His eternal double, as the necessary correlation, the other side of God. It exists because God wills it; it is His creature. Therefore, there is no continuity between God and the world; for it is being-composed, and He is the composer."¹²⁶ Barth also affirms the divine lordship over nature which means that God Himself or His omnipotence, cannot be identified with nature or natural processes. God and His omnipotence are not to be equated with the powers that have been created, or with their sum and substance, as is perhaps the usual course when we think of human and worldly events. All such forces are servants and subjects of the Divine Will; God is Lord over all events no matter how we might interpret otherwise.¹²⁷

God's sovereignty is high above; absolute freedom belongs to Him and to Him only. So far as God Himself is concerned, He

123. Torrance: "What is important is not what man thinks about God but what God thinks about him! Karl Barth, The Expository Times, LXVI. Oct.1954--Sept.1955. p.207.

124. "Der christliche Glaube ist antimystisch, weil er mit der Erkenntnis Ernst macht, dass Gott Personwille ist. Er ist der absolute, der unbedingt freie, souveräne Schöpfer- und Herrenwille." Mystik, p.384.

125. The Christian Doctrine of God, Dogmatics, I. p.228. cf. Mystik, p.339.

126. "Die Welt existiert nicht als sein alter ego, als sein ewiger Doppelgänger, als das notwendige Korrelat, die andere Seite Gottes. Sie existiert, weil und wie Gott sie will; sie ist seine Kreatur. Darum gibt es keine Kontinuität zwischen Gott und Welt; denn sie ist gesetzt, und er ist der Setzer." Mystik, p.384. cf. "God is absolutely free will, free in such a way that the world, His creation, is at every moment conditioned by His will. Its being is like that of a soap bubble which exists only because and as long as it is blown by the blower." Christianity and Civilization, I. p.19.

127. CD II/1. pp.539f.

is quite independent of the world, the fact is that He is wholly self-sufficient and in no way He is conditioned by the world. God, from eternity to eternity, is "the Subject, the Person, who establishes Himself and is founded on Himself(Barth)." He Himself is master of His own existence and essence.¹²⁸ The Creator is the incomparable One who stands beyond the comparison with His creature.

It is true that, in the second edition of his Mystik, Brunner re-evaluates Schleiermacher to a certain extent and admits that his pantheistic tendency is not a deification of the creature.¹²⁹ He also takes into consideration that Schleiermacher asserts: "...in his exposition of Christian faith, [that it is assumed] not to have any philosophical presuppositions at all. His dogmatics is not based on speculation, but the observation of the real Christian life of faith."¹³⁰ Yet, when more closely examined, Brunner remarks:

The thought of a system which secretly determines everything obtrudes itself forcefully, and Schleiermacher's own protests against the assertion that his Glaubenslehre is dependent upon a philosophical system are all the less able to remove this suspicion as they are confronted by completely different statements about the relation of theology and philosophy. This suspicion becomes certainty if it can be proved in the opposite, synthetical way, how the whole theory of Schleiermacher according to structure, content and method is determined by such a system, indeed is nothing but a system of philosophy of religion in christian disguise. 131

128. The Knowledge of God and the Service of God, p.31.

129. "Das Charakteristische für den 'Grundgedanken' ist in der Tat nicht die Vergottung der Kreatur, sondern: die Einheit über den Gegensätzen, oder die gegensatzlos Einheit, die 'Indifferenz' von Natur und Geist, Idealem und Realem in Jenem unerkennbaren X, das hier Gott heisst." Mystik, p.328.

130. "...in seiner Darstellung des christlichen Glaubens gar keine philosophischen Voraussetzungen zu haben. Nicht Speculation, sondern die Beobachtung wirklichen christlichen Glaubenslebens liege seiner Dogmatik zugrunde." Ibid., p.324.

Obviously, the nature of God as Creator is sharply demarcated from the nature of His creatures, without any transition's taking place from one to the other.¹³² However, even after revising some of his criticism, Brunner still regards Schleiermacher's idea of God as obscure: "The feeling as the point of indifference between knowledge of will, is the subjective correlation of the objective point of indifference; it corresponds to the point of unity over the antitheses of the world, that unknowable X which is called, God."¹³³

Schleiermacher cannot escape Brunner's criticism of his knowledge of God, which not is only impersonal and non-Biblical but actually also romantic and mystical, reflecting the vagaries of his own soul and his own speculative imagination. He impersonally regards God as the "Ground" of the world and the soul alike, the "All" of the mystic. It is no coincidence that mysticism and idealism habitually express their God-concepts in neutral terms. The living God is not this type of a God, but the One who names His own name and who alone reveals Himself as Creator God, who alone stands over against humanity and the world.¹³⁴

131. "Der Gedanke eines heimlich alles bestimmenden Systems drängt sich also zwingend auf, und die eigenen Verwahrungen Schleiermachers gegen die Behauptung, seine Glaubenslehre sei von einem philosophischen System abhängig, können diesen Verdacht um so weniger beseitigen, als ihnen ganz andere Aeusserungen über den Zusammenhang von Theologie und Philosophie gegenüberstehen. Der Verdacht wird aber zur Gewissheit, wenn auf dem umgekehrten, synthetischen Wege nachgewiesen werden kann, wie die ganze Theologie Schleiermachers nach Aufbau, Inhalt und Methode durch ein solches System bedingt, ja sogar nichts anderes als ein christlich verkleidetes religionsphilosophisches System ist." Ibid., p.325.

132. The Christian Doctrine of God, Dogmatics, I. p.159.

133. "Das Gefühl, als Indifferenzpunkt zwischen Erkennen und Wollen, ist das subjektive Korrelat des objektiven Indifferenzpunktes; es entspricht dem Einheitspunkt über den Weltgegensätzen, jenem unerkennbaren X, das 'Gott' heisst." Mystik, p.173.

134. The Mediator, p.269.

Thus, all subjective ideas of imagination or speculative description of nature have no corresponding reality in God. Nor must we confuse Creator and creature, as (e.g.,) when we ascribe to God our created nature. God's thoughts and Spirit are not ours (Isa.55:8f.).¹³⁵ Therefore, God cannot be conceived in this way as on the same level with man or nature, or even as the passive object of our thought. God is not a neutral object, like the substance of a chemical experiment or the scientist's dissection table. He does not manifest Himself as an object would. He is person: that is, He is a Spirit who communicates Himself to man with a word of address.¹³⁶ This is simply "because He as the Lord, is precisely the absolute Subject, unconditioned Person."¹³⁷ In this connection, Barth explains that it was only natural for Schleiermacher to consider it impossible to impute to God a state of feeling particularly excited by suffering, and giving rise subsequently to efforts to assist others in their woes. Thus, Schleiermacher tried to divorce the idea of divine mercy from its too dogmatic context and transfer it to one of homiletics and poetry (cf. Der christliche Glaube, s85). Where is the heart of compassion in the source of a feeling of absolute dependence? But the personal God of Christian faith has a heart to feel and be affected, an assertion which in no way contradicts or belies His immovability by outside, extraneous powers. Rather, God is stirred and moved,

135. CD II/1. p.266.

136. God and Man, p.114.

137. Revelation and Reason, p.24; cf. Christianity and Civilization, I. p.39. Also: Whitehouse, "In an unconditioned act of Fatherly Lordship, God established the act of the creature precisely as the act of the creature. If we try to say something about how this happens, and work with the analogy of inter-creatures acts, we fall away into a 'mechanistic', picture, or else we begin to talk of 'emanations' or 'infusions' of the divine being." Providence (An Account of Karl Barth's Doctrine). Scottish Journal of Theology, IV. 3. Sept.1951. p.249.

not in powerlessness as are human beings, but in His own free power and His own innermost being.¹³⁸

Certainly both Brunner and Barth would invite Schleiermacher to renounce his method of reflection which merely subjectivizes his own illusion. It must be remembered here that we are fallen and sinful, miserable creatures; in this hopeless situation only God's mercy is able to come to rescue us.¹³⁹ God is the Creator-Lord, His authority over the world cannot be known through the created world even though all the true realities of it are based on "God's omnipotence as the only true possibility." Barth points out how our Christian knowledge of God states that God alone has all real power. Some would limit such a statement to all the real power that man encounters, but this is a blind deification of nature or history or fate which leads ultimately to an equally blind deification of man himself. We must reject such thinking on the grounds that even though God's true reality is based upon His omnipotence, we cannot in any a priori fashion determine exactly what that true reality is.¹⁴⁰ Brunner indicates that the view that God may be known from the world He has created, is itself a pagan view of divine-human continuity and a denial of the real, personal, and living Creator God.¹⁴¹ Schleiermacher is criticized for thus depersonalizing the living God in terms of the reality of this world:

God, the Lord, who stands in sovereignty over the world which He created out of nothing, whose will is never exhausted in the reality of the world, but who remains

138. CD II/1. p.370.

139. Torrance: "Like the sheep overwhelmed in the snowdrift trying to keep itself alive by feeding upon its own wool, modern philosophy and theology suffered from a cancerous subjectivism. Religious man was trying to keep himself alive by feeding upon his own ideas. What he needed above all was to break through to concrete relations with the living God." Karl Barth, The Expository Times, LXVI. Oct.1954--Sept.1955. p.206.

140. CD II/1. p.531.

141. The Mediator, p.226; cf. The Word and the World, pp.29f. God and Man, pp.60f.

within Himself mysterious and inexhaustible..., who gives to the world participation with Him as much as He pleases, but always remains inexhaustible, mysterious, free in His giving. The living God of the Bible and of the Reformed faith is unknown in the Glaubenslehre. 142

And he affirms that "God is the ground of all knowledge of truth. All truth that we perceive and discover we perceive and discover by virtue of the light that comes from God."¹⁴³

Thus, any kind of negative search for God, or even any blind deification of nature in which we ourselves are involved or into which we actually are pressed, is all in vain.¹⁴⁴ Barth's discussion about the Word of God and experience may throw light on the concept that God is independent of all the determinations of our religious experience, for he points out that the effort of man's self-determination could not at all define for him a synthesis of the relation between the divine and human. He speaks of the very one-sided conceptions of religious experience which can follow from such reasoning. Nor would it really be necessary to rationalize any sort of synthesis on the basis of such reasoning, or on any sort of anthropological grounds. Man's complete and utter dependence on the divine omnipotence may be established readily enough without singling out any one facet of it (e.g., the will or conscience or feeling).¹⁴⁵ It is similarly pointless

142. "Gott der Herr, der souverän über der von ihm aus nichts geschaffenen Welt steht, dessen Wille sich nie in der Weltwirklichkeit erschöpft, sondern in sich selbst geheimnisvoll-unerschöpflich bleibt (Trinität), der der Welt Anteil an sich gibt, so viel er will, aber immer im Geben unerschöpflich, geheimnisvoll, frei bleibt, der lebendige Gott der Bibel und des reformatorischen Glaubens ist der Glaubenslehre unbekannt." Mystik, pp.340f.

143. Revelation and Reason, p.318.

144. Brunner assures us: "A personal God and a personal faith are not possible when our knowledge of God is the result of an interpretation of the world and the Ego. Personal faith and knowledge of a personal God who is Lord of the world can be gained only when God reveals Himself personally. The mysterious God, whom the world neither knows nor shows, whom I do not know and

to go off on such anthropological tangents as have been followed in the past.¹⁴⁶

It should be said, in conclusion, that Brunner continually and justifiably criticizes Schleiermacher primarily as a philosopher. He tends to skip over Schleiermacher the theologian when he even occasionally meets him. On the other hand, Barth from time to time criticizes not only the philosophical but also the semi-theological Schleiermacher whose theological interpretation has been demonstrated to be definitely defective.

We have also noted that Brunner's basis for the rejection of Schleiermacher's elaboration of a mysterious whole is the existence of a great distinction between God and man, Word and world;¹⁴⁷ therefore a Mediator between them is absolutely necessary.¹⁴⁸ According to Brunner and Barth,¹⁴⁹ the gulf separating God and the natural man is not only deep, but actually unfathomable and bottomless. It is impossible to speak of the relation between them in terms of approximation and continuity.

whom the inner man does not reveal, must reveal his mystery to the world---must tell his own name---by 'piercing' into the world. He must assert Himself over against the world as a being who is not-world, not-ego; who reveals his true name, the secret of his unknown will which is opposed to the world, contrary to our experience and, above all, to the thoughts and intents of our own heart." The Theology of Crisis, p.31.

145. CD I/1. p.230.

146. Ibid., p.231; cf. Christianity and Civilization, I. p.30.

147. cf. The Mediator, p.548.

148. Which remotely reflects how this reaction of Brunner caused him to name his books by such titles as God and Man, Word and World, Mediator.

149. Barth, in this aspect, develops his thought most consistently. Brunner appears a little different from Barth in accepting a very limited natural theology for convenience's sake, for reasoning at the expense of a contradiction of what is here his basic and fundamental viewpoint.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DIVINE REBEL VS. A "NOT YET"

Brunner criticizes Schleiermacher for holding a superficial and optimistic theory of evolution rooted in a monistic tendency¹ which naturally does not direct him to a serious knowledge of evil. From the viewpoint of evolutionism, one should not lose sight of this proposition that the concept of sin is always taken as a "not yet." It is due to his immanent mystical experience of religion and his idealistic philosophy of history which prevent his having a realistic approach here. Brunner begins: "There is no rent in the life of history as such which could not be healed by the historical process itself."² In fact, he goes even further when he says:

Even death itself is included in this optimistic approach for the death of the individual is not able to hinder the progress of the Whole. Even in spite of sin the world is good, 'as the development of the power of God-consciousness which is only gradual and imperfect, (according to Schleiermacher, identical with sin), belongs to the conditions of the stage of existence on which humanity stands.' That this stage of existence together with the conditions which belong to it could stand in opposition to the idea of the good creation of God, and therefore become a problem--this central Christian thought disappears in Schleiermacher's optimism of development, just as entirely as the Christian conception of sin. The idea of a continuous development is the theodicy of Schleiermacher. 3

1. cf. Mystik, p.242; God and Man, pp.63ff.

2. The Mediator, p.138.

3. "Auch der Tod ist in diese optimistische Betrachtung eingeschlossen. Denn der Tod des Einzelnen vermag nicht den Fortschritt des Ganzen zu hindern. Ja, trotz der Sünde ist die Welt gut, 'da die nur allmähliche und unvollkommene Entwicklung der Kraft des Gottesbewusstseins (nach Schleiermacher identisch mit Sünde) zu den Bedingungen der Existenzstufe gehört, auf welcher das menschliche Geschlecht steht.' Dass diese Existenzstufe samt den zu ihr gehörenden Bedingungen mit dem Gedanken der guten Schöpfung Gottes im Widerspruch stehen und darum zum Problem

Therefore, blindness to the fact of sin is the notion upon which all forms of mysticism and idealism, together with all beliefs of modern theology, rest. Schleiermacher and others who try to ignore the all-pervading fact of sin (as, e.g., via some immanentist Weltanschauung) will meet their Waterloo when they strike "the solid rock of sin and guilt."⁴ Barth comments thus on the situation of being a sinner: "Though he rebels against Him [God], he cannot escape from Him, though he abandons himself, he is and remains held by God. Though he becomes blind to God, yet God does not become blind for him."⁵ Brunner also explains that a mystic does not realize this situation at all, for he prefers seeking to abolish the limits of divine and human, the separation between God and man, by attempting to approximate to one another or metaphysically identify the differences in the Universe.⁶ The knowledge of sin is an expression to intensify the conception of discontinuity. Brunner says that "the strongest expression to describe this discontinuity is just sin. Sin is the gulf which separates God and man."⁷ It really involves a serious break and

werden könnte---diese zentrale christliche Gedanke geht in Schleiermachers Entwicklungsoptimismus ebenso unter wie der christliche Sündenbegriff. Die Idee der stetigen Entwicklung ist die Theodizee Schleiermachers." Mystik, p.343.

4. The Theology of Crisis, p.17. cf. The Divine Imperative, p.75.

5. "Rebelliert er gegen ihm, so kann er ihm doch nicht entrinnen. Gibt er sich selbst preis, so ist und bleibt er doch von Gott gehalten. Wird er blind für Gott, so wird doch Gott nicht blind für ihn." KD III/2. p.38.

6. cf. Iwand: "Und auch das wagt Schleiermacher, man könnte fast meinen, um der Wissenschaft den Spiegel vorzuhalten, damit sie nicht vergesse, dass alle ihre Gegensätze nur relativ sind: 'Wie im höchsten Sein Natur Vernunft ist und Vernunft Natur, Idee Erscheinung und Erscheinung Idee und im höchsten Wissen Ethik Physik und Physik Ethik, das Speculative zugleich empirisch und das Empirische zugleich speculativ---fast möchte man dazwischen rufen: bei der Auferstehung der Toten, denn so ist es ja gemeint!' op. cit., pp.54f.

7. The Mediator, p.291.

signifies that the continuity has been broken.⁸ Thus we find that Brunner writes:

Mysticism does not know the problem of guilt; the problem of finitude and imperfection take its place. Where guilt is, all continuity is abolished. From our viewpoint, the separation cannot be abolished, for guilt is the broken fellowship which can be re-established only through a new beginning from the other side: through reconciliation which must be the act of Him to whom I have been indebted. To speak of God, to seek relationship with Him, bypassing our guilt means non-seriousness, regardlessness, indeed, forgetfulness of God. 9

Why does Schleiermacher not possess a serious conception of sin? If it were really the case that sin, from the point of view of reconciliation, is not taken seriously, the writer would venture to suggest that since the divine element co-exists in one's immediate feeling, as Schleiermacher interprets it, then, naturally he will take up this non-serious concept of sin, simply because the reconciliation takes place in the religious feeling. Therefore, as a result, man is not only just neutral as if he were a spectator in that situation as Brunner says with reference to an individual:

In the depths of his being he is convinced that he tends towards good and not towards evil; this being so he finds it impossible to take the whole problem of evil very seriously, at least so far as he is concerned as an individual. It is impossible to combine the consciousness of sin with the sense of immanence of goodness which characterizes moral Idealism and its immanent theories. 10

8. Brunner: "It is the breaking of a personal relationship. Hence the most appalling thing about sin is this: that through it the original personal relation between the Creator and the creature has been distorted. Guilt now lies between man and God. God can no longer admit man to His Presence. Man has cast away the grace of God. 'Guilt' is the term which expresses the broken fellowship." *Ibid.*, p.147.

9. "Die Mystik kennt das Problem der Schuld nicht; an seine Stelle setzt sie das Problem der Endlichkeit und Unvollkommenheit. Schuld hebt alle Kontinuität auf. Wo Schuld ist,

But he may even aesthetically interpret sin as a possible element in relation to grace; or evil as a normal process in relation to good in the optimistic view of development.

According to Brunner and Barth, sin means a revolt against the Creator-Lord; a claim of independence before His sovereign majesty. Therefore it causes a separation or discontinuity between God and man. Sin is rebellion against God's grace. As Barth holds that sin as disobedience against the will of God is the renunciation of God's grace and its command.¹¹ A sinner is in conflict with God and therefore is defined as a divine rebel. Even being a sinner, he is God's creature as belonging to God. and he sins against God and his sin is opposition to Him. Sin in this relation to God actually means ungodliness.¹²

Therefore, Barth criticizes Schleiermacher for his misapprehension of sin:

Sin...in his thought...consists for him merely in the 'insuperable lack of potency in God-consciousness' (i.e. the God-consciousness of the natural man). It is not understood as the enmity of man towards God, an enmity to which God's wrath is the answer and which involves a real and fundamental darkening of this natural man before God. According to Schleiermacher, the communion of man with God established by creation is not seriously compromised by sin.¹³

kann von mir aus die Trennung nicht aufgehoben werden. Schuld ist die zerbrochene Gemeinschaft, die nur durch eine neue Setzung von der anderen Seite neu begründet werden kann: durch Versöhnung, die die Tat dessen sein muss, an dem ich schuldig geworden bin. Von Gott reden, mit Gott sich in Beziehung setzen an der Schuld vorbei, das ist Unernst, Leichtsinn, ja Gottvergessenheit." Mystik, p.396; cf. The Mediator, p.131.

10. The Mediator, p.210; cf. "This superficial evaluation of our human situation is, however, exactly that false optimism which was the reproach of the past century. To see our reality from the view-point of 'not-yet' is an optical illusion." Christianity and Civilization, II. p.36.

11. KD III/3. p.350.

12. CD II/1. p.401; p.503; The Divine-Human Encounter, p.97; Man in Revolt, p.117; The Mediator, p.444.

13. CD I/2. p.134.

According to Barth, the nature of sin is due to the fact that when man turns away from the grace of God, he perverts his own nature:

Man is called to hold to the grace of His Creator, to be thankful for it, to bow to it and adapt himself to it, to honour it as the truth. And the essence of sin is that he does not do this. He denies and despises and hates grace and breaks its commandment, the law of the covenant. It is in this opposition that sin takes place, that it has its place and reality: as man's turning aside from God, and therefore as the perversion of his own nature; as the abuse and disturbance and destruction of the possibilities of his creaturely being and the radical compromising of his destiny. 14

Therefore sin, interpreted in this sense, would be really an inexplicable concept. Brunner points out the very irrational character of this concept:

Sin is something which we cannot explain, something which will not fit into any reasonable scheme at all. For it is the primal fact of non-reason. The more we try to explain evil, the more we deny its reality, and the more superficial we become. The more anyone knows what evil is, the more inexplicable does it become. 15

Evidently, man does not even have the ability to know this spiritual enigma;¹⁶ because he himself is in an obstinate, unreconciled situation which produces a problematical, unresolved disturbance for himself. According to Barth: "That man is evil, that he is at odds with God and his neighbour, and therefore with himself, is something which he cannot know of himself."¹⁷

14. CD IV/1. p.140; cf. p.528; CD II/1. p.595.

15. The Mediator, p.144.

16. Brunner: "Hence the conception of 'sin' is not a philosophical, but a religious idea. The philosophical idea is called 'evil.' But evil is never so bad as sin. For it is not rebellion, it does not mean the severance of our relation with our origin, but it simply means opposition to the norm or to the Idea." Ibid., p.462.

17. CD IV/1. pp.359f.

When referring to sin, Barth goes on to explain: "Its actuality is the man who sins, who can recognize and confess but not explain and understand himself as such."¹⁸ Brunner practically holds the same view: "Sin means that I am in wrong relation to God and that I have torn myself away from an original divinely given possibility."¹⁹ He goes on: "it is an alienation, a disrupted relation, a having left the Father. The contradiction in our existence can be recognized only as an impenetrable mystery."²⁰ Barth continues to explain that this is because "men preoccupied with themselves have no eyes to see this or categories to grasp it."²¹

Thus, one may ask whether a general knowledge of sin is possible? No! According to Brunner and Barth, the true knowledge of sin is a gift of God which is possible only through the revelation of God in Christ on the Cross there the Reconciler reveals the seriousness of sin; the real conflict between man and his Creator. At this point, Barth insists: "We maintain the simple thesis that only when we know Jesus Christ do we really know that man is the man of sin, and what sin is, and what it means for man."²² Brunner denounces also any way other than this of knowing our sin:

The Christian faith knows absolute guilt. But it knows it, not mainly because it penetrates even deeper into the human heart but because it recognizes in revelation, in that

18. *Ibid.*, p.410.

19. *The Theology of Crisis*, pp.54f.

20. *Ibid.*, p.55; cf. *The Divine-Human Encounter*, p.97.

21. CD IV/1. p.360; cf. "He may be aware of the problematic nature of his existence as man. But this does not mean even remotely that he is aware of his being as the man of sin, at odds with God and his neighbour and himself. The imperfection and the problematical nature of his existence is not as such sin." *Loc. cit.*

22. *Ibid.*, p.389; cf. pp.397, 400, 403. KD III/2. p.29.

which God does to man, [and] what He does for man, how great is the gulf between man and the Creator. It recognizes the pondus peccati through the Cross of Christ.²³

To open discussion on the theory of relativism which Schleiermacher used for the apprehension of the nature of sin, we note that Brunner deems it too defective a description for the Christian interpretation of the nature of sin. Thus, Brunner thinks at least this narrow theory must be expanded or its relativistic character must be transformed into an absolute character. According to Brunner's criticism of Schleiermacher's approach, the doctrine of sin or evil is merely relativistic: from the viewpoint of more or less, weak or strong, incapable or capable, lower or higher, sensuous or spiritual. "In the course of development toward speculative Idealism moral common sense is replaced by the Neoplatonist idea that sin is non-existence," says Brunner, "in Schleiermacher, to the fact that the sense element is stronger than the spiritual forces, or to weakness of the consciousness of God, to the fact that the existence of the spiritual has 'not-yet' taken place, or that the animal element 'is still' present."²⁴ Thus, what is implied in this viewpoint is that a quantitative abstraction of difference with a presupposition of continuity lying between their spheres. But when Brunner traces back the true nature of sin as due to "the nature of man as a whole,"²⁵ he affirms that sin cannot be interpreted superficially in this quantitative sense:

23. "Der christliche Glaube kennt die absolute Schuld. Er kennt sie aber nicht vor allem darum, weil er noch tiefer in des Menschen Herz hineinschaut, sondern weil er in der Offenbarung, in dem, was Gott am Menschen, für den Menschen tut, ermisst, wie gross die Kluft zwischen ihm und dem Schöpfer ist. Er erkennt das pondus peccati durch das Kreuz des Christus." Mystik, p.397. cf. Revelation and Reason, pp.50, 106; The Mediator, p.150; God and Man, p.151.

24. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics II. pp.116f. cf. Mystik, pp.333; 342f.

25. The Mediator, p.141.

Man does not only do wrong, he does not only commit sinful acts, but he is bad, he is a sinner. A sinner is not a human being who has sinned a certain number of times; he is a human being who sins whatever he is doing. So long as this is not perceived the gravity of sin is ignored, and the point of view remains superficial. 26

And Brunner, wishing to strengthen the Christian opposition to the hidden unity in this theory of relativism, expands its very relativistic view:

Between all Christian antitheses is that 'great gulf fixed,' which cuts off a continuous way of 'more and more,' from the 'less and less.' Between Creator and creature, sin and grace, election and rejection, wrath and reconciliation, there are no continuous passages at all. For having become existentially personal, the antitheses yes and no has been enlarged here a thousand times. There is no continuity between salvation and non-salvation, therefore, there is no as-well-as, but only either-or. 27

Brunner means that "through the double limits of the creatureliness and sin, all continuity from man to God is made impossible. Therefore, there is no such a way, a gradual approximation which all mysticism would characterize."²⁸ He explains the original meaning of guilt as the true separation between God and man

26. ibid., p.142.

27. "Zwischen allen christlichen Gegensätzen ist jene 'tiefe Kluft befestigt,' durch die kein stetiger Weg des 'mehr und mehr,' des 'weniger und weniger' führt. Zwischen Schöpfer und Geschöpf, Sünde und Gnade, Erwählung und Verwerfung, Zorn und Versöhnung gibt es keine stetigen Uebergänge, überhaupt keine Uebergänge. Hier ist der Gegensatz ja--nein tausendfach gesteigert, weil existentiell persönlich geworden. Zwischen Heil und Unheil ist kein Kontinuum, also kein Sowohl-als-auch, sondern nur das Entweder-oder." Mystik, p.334. cf. p.335. Also: "Entweder ist der Glaube einzig und allein als die Beziehung zu Gott zu verstehen, d.h. also so, dass man Gott schlechterdings voraussetzt, oder dann gibt es keinen Glauben." Erlebnis, Erkenntnis und Glaube, (Zweite und dritte, neubearbeitete Auflage, Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) 1923), p.90.

28. "Damit ist durch die doppelte Schranke der Kreatürlichkeit und Sünde jede Kontinuität vom Menschen aus zu Gott unmöglich gemacht. Es gibt also das nicht, was alle Mystik charakterisiert: einen Weg, stufenweise Annäherung." Mystik, p.384.

and he assures us that it is only the free act of divine grace which comes to action to restore the broken relationship:

Guilt, taken seriously, means there is no way. Between you and God lies the block which you cannot remove, the swamp you cannot wade through. Guilt means there is no way from man to God, no way of interiorizing to God, of an ascent or climbing in one's own depth, but only through the divine act which happens indeed inconceivably, unexpectedly, 'incidentally,' unnecessary, really irrationally free, just as sin which really happens also inconceivably. Therefore, we cannot but wonder at the reconciliation that proceeded from God and accomplished by God. 29

In Brunner's criticism of Schleiermacher's doctrine of original sin, he points out that Schleiermacher's thought returns to this self-same theory of relativism when he assumes a neutral analysis of human nature and divides the "I" into two states: "flesh" and "spirit" which are alien to each other³⁰ as if it were a sort of conceivable struggle between two powers in its interesting drama. Brunner criticizes him for his doctrine of original sin, which deviates from the language of the Bible, and substitutes for it an idea of evolution³¹ which seems characteristic of

29. "Schuld aber, ernst genommen, heisst: es gibt diesen Weg nicht. Zwischen dir und Gott liegt der Block, den du nicht heben kannst, der Sump, durch den du nicht hindurchzuwaten vermagst. Schuld heisst, es gibt keinen Weg vom Menschen zu Gott, sondern nur: das Wunder der von Gott ausgehenden, von Gott selbst vollzogenen Versöhnung. Es gibt also nicht ein zu Gott kommen auf dem Weg der Verinnerlichung, des in die eigene Tiefe Steigens, des Klimmens, sondern nur durch göttliche Tat, die ebenso unbegreiflich, unerwartet, 'zufällig,' nicht-notwendig, frei, irrational-wirklich geschieht, als die Sünde unbegreiflich-wirklich geschieht." *Ibid.*, p.396.

30. "Sie zerreisst das Ich in zwei einander fremde, nur kausal aufeinander bezogene Hälften (Bremse und Rad), sie macht dadurch das Wort Ich zur inhaltlosen Schale." *Ibid.*, p.223.

31. Brunner: "He tried to conceive the meaning of the ecclesiastical doctrine of Original Sin in evolutionary terms by applying the idea of the after-effects of the earlier stages of evolution to the present stage of evolution." *Man in Revolt*, p.400. Note: this term "evolution" is used, of course, in a philosophical sense rather than in a biological one.

his age. Therefore the question may be asked here: Is Schleiermacher dealing with sin at all, or with something else? Brunner does not hesitate to point this out that Schleiermacher's doctrine of original sin has arrived at this view that man, at every new stage in his development, feels that he has been hindered by the previous stages, and yet Schleiermacher sees these hindrances as determinative factors which arise from the "sense-nature," i.e., the "flesh". But one may question him for the usage of this Biblical expression whether he has distorted its original meaning or not, because the conflict of a personal decision between the spirit and the flesh becomes a dynamic dialectic of the "sense-nature" and the "spirit-ideal" in the human development. He sees original sin as a kind of atavism; it means the spirit, failing to keep pace with the other elements in the process of this development. We can see that Schleiermacher could not at all solve this problem of original sin (Erbsünde) afresh, for he has actually turned it to another direction by means of "an idealistic evolutionism with a strong naturalistic tinge." Therefore, we are certain to say that "Schleiermacher is not dealing with sin at all, but with stages of development."³²

According to Brunner's criticism, in Schleiermacher's thought sin merely involves one's mental attitude which arises from the subjective reflection on something negative, and therefore it only means a psychological element. How futile this kind of interpretation is which eventually does not contribute anything substantial to our knowledge of the true nature of sin in the Christian sense. As Brunner says:

Our knowledge of the growth of humanity or of the single human being may possibly enrich our conception of the actual, concrete forms of sin, but they can never in the slightest degree make any contribution to our knowledge of the

32. Ibid., pp.123f.

nature of sin itself, the fact of the sinful decision as such. 33

And he concludes at this point that "man's creation in the image of God, and also his 'contradiction,' are facts which do not lie upon the empirical plane, but through the genuinely historical they impinge upon it, and manifest themselves within it."³⁴

Barth cannot entirely agree with Brunner's criticism of Schleiermacher's conception of original sin. From Barth's viewpoint, it is true that for Schleiermacher, original sin involves something original in man and manifested in history; but it is not actually so passive as it has been described, that is, from the psychological point of view merely as a stage in the course of development. Why does Brunner not take notice of how Schleiermacher relates this situation to actual sin and to the corporate act of the human race?³⁵

When referring to the concept of evil, we find that Brunner criticizes Schleiermacher thus:

What one otherwise calls evil is the natural, necessary pre-supposition of the whole ethical process, and of the whole human life. All the differences between good and evil are therefore completely relative. The good is only known as a gradual growth and the evil a gradual disappearance. Good and evil merely denote stages on the long course of development. 36

As Brunner understands it: "The contrast between evil and good is further declared to be as nothing other than the negative and

33. Ibid., p.401.

34. Loc. cit.

35. KD III/3, p.372, and Christian Faith, pp.286, 320.

36. "Das, was man sonst das Böse nennt, ist die natürliche, notwendige Voraussetzung des ganzen sittlichen Prozesses, des ganzen menschlichen Lebens. Alle Unterschiede von Gut und Böse sind darum völlig relative. Das Gute ist nur bekannt als ein allmählich werdendes und das Böse als ein allmählich verschwindendes. Gut und Böse bezeichnen bloss Stationen auf dem langen Weg der Entwicklung." Mystik, p.285.

positive factors in the process of the union of nature and spirit."³⁷ Thus, evil is interpreted simply from the idealistic point of view as something negative: being the not-yet good, or the absence of something, and is only developed as a metaphysical principle or an ethical process which is conceived as necessary in the totality of nature, for it appears to Schleiermacher as a determinative factor in the furthering of the whole. The origin of its existence is quite vague and questionable. As Brunner puts it: "Evil is only something which is negative: as the shadow, the non-existence of light; as the weakness, the non-existence of power. Thus evil is simply the non-existence or not-yet existence of good."³⁸ Brunner similarly applies this concept of negation to Schleiermacher's concept of sin: "Even thus the concept of sin is still a purely negative one: the non-existence of God-consciousness. Sin therefore does not mean that something exists which should not be there, a tremendous dreadful reality, but only that something is not there."³⁹

Seen from these passages quoted above, the writer would suggest that Brunner is not quite doing justice to Schleiermacher's conception of sin- or world-consciousness and God-consciousness and their relation to each other. As Barth understands it, they are actually not two separate or independent modes of existence but two elements in one and the same consciousness. One must carefully consider what Schleiermacher really means and

37. "Der Gegensatz zwischen gut und böse, wird weiter ausgeführt, sei nichts anderes als der positive und negative Faktor im Prozess der Vereinigung von Natur und Geist." Ibid., p.218.

38. "Das Böse ist nur etwas Negatives; wie der Schatten das Nichtdasein des Lichtes, wie Schwachheit das Nichtdasein der Kraft, so ist das Böse einfach das Nichtdasein oder Nochnichtdasein des Guten." Loc. cit.

39. "Auch so noch ist der Begriff der Sünde ein rein negativer: Das Nichtdasein des Gottesbewusstseins. Sünde heisst also nicht, dass etwas da ist, das nicht da sein sollte, eine ungeheure furchtbare Realität, sondern bloss, dass etwas nicht da ist." Ibid., p.220.

not be led aside by his dialectical analysis of the one and the same religious consciousness. Barth defends Schleiermacher:

Therefore one cannot even say that sin, according to Schleiermacher, exists only in that man is 'not yet spirit': 'Nature is that which is not yet spirit.' One does not consider Schleiermacher's presuppositions at all if one thinks that the nature could become spirit. Indeed this could mean that the human world-consciousness (40) as being transformed into the pure God-consciousness. But here Schleiermacher's idealistic interpretation of the human consciousness is not that of a pure God-consciousness and therefore of a pure spiritual existence, but that of a world-consciousness which is stamped and filled, penetrated and dominated by a God-consciousness: of a world-consciousness with all the attributes and signs of a God-consciousness. 41

Thus, Brunner seems to have overemphasized Schleiermacher's negation of the reality or existence of sin when he relates Schleiermacher's concept of sin to this concept of negation which he applied in his criticism of Schleiermacher's concept of evil. This can be attested by comparing the following passage of his own, also in this passage, we take notice of his further explanation of Schleiermacher's possession of such an indefinite and non-serious concept of sin and evil. He says:

40. Here world-consciousness, as Barth understands it, i.e. sin: "Denn einmal versteht Schleiermacher unter Sinnlichkeit nicht etwa nur die spezifisch physischen Triebe, sondern das ganze menschliche Sein bzw. Bewusstsein mit Einschluss der Fähigkeit und Tätigkeit des Verstandes und des Willens, sofern dieses als Weltbewusstsein von dem Menschen Gottesbewusstsein in seinem Gegensatz zum Gottesbewusstsein zu unterscheiden ist." KD III/3. p.371.

41. "Man kann darum auch nicht sagen, dass die Sünde bei Schleiermacher nur darin bestehe, dass der Mensch 'noch nicht Geist' sei: 'Natur, die noch nicht Geist ist.' Dass die Natur Geist werde, kann nach Schleiermachers Voraussetzungen gar nicht in Frage kommen. Das würde ja heissen, dass des Menschen Weltbewusstsein sich verwandle in lauter Gottesbewusstsein. Nun ist aber Schleiermachers Idealbild vom menschlichen Bewusstsein nicht das eines reinen Gottesbewusstseins und also eines reinen Geistseins, sondern das eines vom Gottesbewusstsein beherrschten, durchdrungenen, erfüllten und geprägten Weltbewusstseins: eines Weltbewusstseins mit allen Eigenschaften und Merkmalen des Gottesbewusstseins." Ibid., p.372.

The spirit in man is free from sin. That in us which knows of God, is not that which is to be made responsible for sin. The evil has its seat not in the centre of man, but in the periphery; not the heart, the noblest part, is affected by sin, but only the limbs. As where the God-consciousness is localized, so is also sin localized, and thereby it is made harmless. 42

Is it not true that as Brunner says: "As where the God-consciousness is localized, so is also sin localized"? It is evident that this is contradictory to what he has said in the above.

Judging from Schleiermacher's concept of evil and sin, it is seen here that Brunner is right. According to Schleiermacher, evil or sin really has its seat only in the periphery not in the centre. Therefore, evil or sin is taken by him in a light sense and it is never a serious thing to deal with.

Brunner clearly states that his own conception is different: "The origin of evil is the defiance, the usurping of the divine right; the attack of the divine singular authority, the will of being like God."⁴³ Barth, to a certain extent, agrees with him: "the question about the possibility of sin as the act in which, in defiance of the sovereignty of God, the creature arrogated to himself not only his own reality but independent reality, an absolute independence, and therefore makes himself God."⁴⁴ According to Brunner and Barth, sin or evil must not be

42. "Der Geist im Menschen ist frei von Sünde. Das in uns, was von Gott weiss, ist nicht das, was für die Sünde verantwortlich zu machen ist. Nicht im Zentrum des Menschen hat das Böse seinen Sitz, sondern in der Peripherie. Nicht das Herz, der edelste Teil, ist von der Sünde ergriffen, sondern nur die Glieder. Wie das Gottesbewusstsein lokalisiert ist, ist nun auch die Sünde lokalisiert und damit harmlos gemacht." Mystik, p.222. cf. pp.225f.

43. "Der Ursprung des Bösen ist der Trotz, das Greifen nach dem göttlichen Recht, die Antastung der göttlichen Allein-Autorität, das Seinwollen wie Gott." Ibid., p.224. cf. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.93.

44. Credo, p.36.

interpreted as the disturbance of the religious consciousness; it is the pride of man, the revolt against his Creator-Lord. That is why Brunner reminds us that concerning the divine wrath and punishment, Schleiermacher has nothing to say; theodicy to him, simply means a continuous development. Brunner points out: "It is obvious that the conception of the Divine Wrath...causes great embarrassment to a rationalist of the Enlightenment school, or to a theologian like Schleiermacher, with his pantheistic tendencies."⁴⁵ It can be seen why Brunner thus criticizes Schleiermacher because of his impersonal concept of God.⁴⁶ As a result, the Divine Wrath can only be presupposed as elements of thought fragmentarily reflected by the human situation. Therefore, unless sin is taken seriously as a personal act against a personal God, the Divine Wrath cannot be understood as the reaction of God to sin.⁴⁷ Thus Brunner criticizes Schleiermacher's view: "The doctrine of Divine Wrath and punishment does not cause any disturbance in the system of continuity. Schleiermacher has obviously no place for a doctrine of Divine Wrath. He merely indicates that he must reject it as an anthropomorphism, and silently and completely omits this theme elsewhere."⁴⁸ According to Brunner and Barth, God's anger is real enough (so as) not to be denied or explained away; but it is not the ultimate reality.

45. The Christian Doctrine of God, Dogmatics, I. p.167.

46. "Tested by this conception of sin (as rebellion) it soon becomes clear whether the Idea of God is really personal or not. It is never personal where God is merely an object of thought, where knowledge of God is based upon knowledge of the world and philosophical reflection." The Mediator, p.462.

47. Ibid., p.518.

48. "Die Lehre vom göttlichen Zorn und der Strafe, bringt keinerlei Störung in das Stetigkeitssystem. Denn eine Lehre vom göttlichen Zorn gibt es selbstverständlich für Schleiermacher nicht. Er deutet bloss an, dass er sie als Anthropomorphismus ablehnen müsste, und übergeht im übrigen dieses Thema mit völligem Stillschweigen." Mystik, p.343.

Rather, it is the divine reality which corresponds to sin, instead of the essential reality of God.⁴⁹ One may ask how Schleiermacher can do away this doctrine of divine wrath so easily? Here Mackintosh comments on the situation of that time, i.e.,

when the doctrine of the sinful nature of man fell away, and man was declared capable of finding his own way to the God who had made him. It is a mood which unconsciously has affected many who in set terms would disown it. Barth holds, not unjustly as I think, that the all but openly professed purpose of much contemporary theology has been to satisfy the human intelligence---its religious, moral, and even aesthetic assumptions---rather than to understand, obey, and set forth the Word of God. 50

One can see that the modernist possesses an illusory autonomy and therefore he is self-satisfied and even grace-defiant; he relies on the immanent thought of idealism rather than on the redemptive act of God in the biblical sense of the term; he does not need forgiveness, he has no room for God's forgiveness for he does not believe in the serious break between God and man; at bottom, he is self-forgiven⁵¹ and self-justified,⁵² fully believing that basically he tends toward good rather than evil.⁵³ As Brunner says that "all non-Biblical doctrine makes evil harmless and excuses man, whereas the Bible shows up sin in all its terrible character and makes man 'inexcusable.'"⁵⁴ Along this line of

49. The Mediator, p.519.

50. Types of Modern Theology, pp.269f.

51. Brunner: "There is only one thing that decides whether we believe in Christ or not: either we know that we are sinners, who need the forgiveness of sins, or we believe that we can deal with our sins quite well by ourselves." The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.256.

52. Brunner: "Schleiermacher z.B. konnte von seiner subjektivistischen Grundstellung aus unmöglich Raum haben für den radikalen Gegensatz zu allem Subjektivismus, für die Rechtfertigungslehre." Erlebnis, Erkenntnis und Glaube, p.38.

53. The Mediator, p.210.

54. Man in Revolt, p.131.

thought, we also find that Barth depicts for us the self-pitying situation of a self-excused man:

He may not be a complete stranger to something like remorse. But can he not still give to this remorse the form of self-pity, and because of the very sincerity of this pity think that he is excused, or even justified, and therefore at bottom good? Within its limit the nature created by God is indeed good and not bad. Within the sphere of the self-knowledge not enlightened and instructed by the Word of God there is no place for anything worthy of the name of a 'knowledge of sin.' 55

According to Brunner's skilful explanation, in the Christian sense of the word:

Justification means that God speaks to the godless man who belongs to Him. No 'outpouring' of grace takes place, but only the claim of grace. Therefore grace here is really grace and not a concealed continuity, therefore a concealed disappearance of the antithesis, the antithesis is abolished by the Word, which is accepted by faith and which creates this acceptable faith. 56

And he points out that "for Schleiermacher the problem of guilt does not exist at all---justification is merely the subjective reflex of the beginning of redemption."⁵⁷

Schleiermacher, as we have noted, has been charged with frivolity when dealing with this serious issue of sin or guilt, for it is not taken as enmity against God,⁵⁸ but as imperfection,

55. CD IV/1. p.360.

56. "Rechtfertigung heisst: Gott spricht den gottlosen Menschen als zu ihm gehörig an. Keine 'Eingiessung' der Gnade findet statt, sondern der Spruch der Gnade. Darum ist hier Gnade wirklich Gnade und nicht heimliche Kontinuität, also heimliche Abschwächung des Gegensatzes. Unter voller Anerkennung des Gegensatzes wird der Gegensatz aufgehoben durch das Wort, das vom Glauben empfangen wird und das diesen empfangenden Glauben schafft." *Mystik*, p.385.

57. *The Mediator*, p.438.

58. Brunner reminds us: "The centre...of this disorder is the human heart, the false attitude of the human ego to his Creator." *Ibid.*, p.553.

in constructing his theology. According to Brunner and Barth: man's sin is before God and against His will. Sin is the desire for freedom from Him by asserting one's own understanding of freedom; i.e., autonomous in self-isolation, not theonomously free in faith. Barth explains: "For against God's grace he sins: in that he rebels against it, and so against God, in that he does not want to live by God's grace, but rather, he wants to live in another freedom, his own freedom and righteousness; therefore he entangles himself in contradiction to himself."⁵⁹ Brunner adds: "But the Christian conception strengthens the character of guilt: it is guilt before God, in the presence of God, the Lord, therefore it is a positive defiance."⁶⁰ Then Brunner and Barth go on: "Sin in its unity and totality is always pride (Barth)."⁶¹ It is disobedience to God, unbelief in Him;⁶² it is self-determination, therefore, as its result, self-alienation or contradiction even to his own creaturely existence, for he is no longer authentic to his origin and he has, in fact, turned away from it:⁶³ "As a sinner man is no longer true man; in some way

59. "Denn an Gottes Gnade sündigt er: indem er gegen sie und so gegen Gott rebelliert, indem er nicht von Gottes Gnade, indem er in einer anderen, in seiner eigenen Freiheit und Gerechtigkeit leben will, verwickelt er sich in den Widerspruch mit sich selbst." KD III/2. p.36.

60. "Die christliche Auffassung aber potenziert den Charakter der Schuld: Es ist Schuld vor Gott, im Angesicht Gottes, des Herrn; es ist also positiver Trotz." *Mystik*, p.224. cf. "This is the presupposition for the eschatological character of the scriptural faith in revelation: the fact that sin is taken seriously, that this gulf is seen to exist. Neither Speculation, Idealism, Mysticism, nor rational Moralism see this gulf. They do not take sin seriously. Above all, they do not take it seriously in its personal centre: guilt." *The Mediator*, p.291.

61. CD IV/1. p.413.

62. cf. *Ibid.*, pp.414f.

63. Whitehouse: "It must be admitted that we cannot penetrate past sin (as past a mere accidental determination) to reach undisturbed human nature. Man's nature cannot be traced from 'surviving lineaments,' nor can it be inferred dialectically from

or another he is 'in-human' (Brunner),"⁶⁴ for the reason, "whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."⁶⁵ "It is true that sin is a determination in which man is estranged from himself, by which he is betrayed to a foreign sphere and foreign power."⁶⁶ Therefore, Brunner criticizes Schleiermacher for his having diluted this fact of sin as contradiction by substituting a concept of sensuousness alien to the Biblical conception:

According to the Biblical conception, there is indeed no sin as sensuality, [in the sense] low urges of the soul. On the contrary, the so-called lowness has only become low through the sin of man, but sin itself is disobedience. Sin is sin in being contradiction, and therefore, it is no accident, but arises from the nature of the case, that there should be no place for it in Schleiermacher's interpretation. ⁶⁷

Thus, sin is not only viewed as a revolt against the divine will, as disobedience, but also as a compromise of the ground of human existence as contradiction. Therefore, even from the viewpoint of the Christian understanding of sin, it is paradoxical and its form mythological.⁶⁸ Sin is actually a positive negation, a negative relation to God.⁶⁹ Even "forgiveness

knowledge of sinners." The Christian View of Man (An examination of Karl Barth's Doctrine). Scottish Journal of Theology, II.no.1. Mar.1949, pp.59f.

64. The Divine Imperative, p.485; cf. Revelation and Reason p.74.

65. John 8:34. cf. Brunner: "Freedom in solitude, life on one's own resources, belongs to God alone, and the attempt to reach this freedom is the hybris of man which plunges him into slavery to evil. Every freedom other than that which is found in dependence upon God is illusion and slavery." God and Man, p.83.

66. CD IV/1. p.403; cf. pp.406, 435. The Mediator, p.463. Man in Revolt, p.254.

67. "Nach biblischer Auffassung gibt es gar keine Sünde der Sinnlichkeit, der niedrigen Seelenkräfte. Im Gegenteil, das sogenannte Niedrige ist nur niedrig geworden durch die Sünde des Menschen, diese selbst aber ist Ungehorsam. Sünde ist Sünde als Widerspruch, darum etwas, was in der Auffassung Schleiermachers nicht zufällig, sondern notwendig keine Stelle hat." Mystik, p.224.

68. Ibid., pp.335, 385.

is the absolutely paradoxical union of that which cannot be combined: guilt exists, yet it exists no more. It (forgiveness) is the sovereign act of the free God who nevertheless through His freedom does not abolish the eternity of His law, His truth."⁷⁰ Why is its whole conception so paradoxical? Because there is the judgment of God over sin, yet the grace of God stands behind it, therefore it is also the forgiveness of God which justifies the sinner. That is why Barth says: "Even God's judgment of man which is accomplished and reveals itself in the Word of God belongs to His activity as the gracious God."⁷¹ It is no wonder that Brunner writes:

All paradoxes of the Christian witnesses and all dialectics of theology have their origin here in this insoluble basic paradox. In the insufficient, yet unavoidable form of 'mythological' conceptions the fact of the brokenness of existence finds its expression: The cleft in the world is no mere appearance, but in spite of the original goodness of God's creation (which is still present in its corruption) is recognized as objective reality. Therefore the doctrine of sin is the point where the Christian or non-Christian doctrine of faith distinguishes itself. 72

Therefore, in order to present its absurdity, sin is inevitably

69. Revelation and Reason, pp.25, 26, 29.

70. "Vergebung ist das absolut paradoxe Zusammenbestehen des Unvereinbaren: Die Schuld besteht, aber sie besteht doch nicht mehr. Es ist die Herrentat des freien Gottes, der doch durch seine Freiheit nicht die Ewigkeit seines Gesetzes, seiner Wahrheit aufhebt." Mystik, p.238.

71. "Es gehört ja auch das in Gottes Wort sich vollziehende und sich offenbarende Gericht Gottes über den Menschen zu seinem Handeln als der gnädige Gott." KD III/2. p.36.

72. "Alles Paradoxien des christlichen Zeugnisses und alle Dialektik der Theologie haben hier, in diesem unauflösbaren Grundparadox, ihren Ursprung. In der unzulänglichen, aber unvermeidlichen Form 'mythologischer' Vorstellungen kommt hier die Tatsache der Gebrochenheit der Existenz zum Ausdruck: Der Riss in der Welt ist kein Schein, sondern trotz der guten Schöpfung Gottes (die auch in ihrer Verderbnis noch vorhanden ist), als objektive Wirklichkeit anerkannt. Darum ist die Lehre von der Sünde der Punkt, wo sich die Christlichkeit oder Nichtchristlichkeit einer Glaubenslehre entscheidet." Mystik, p.341.

explained in the form of myth. Brunner assures us that "the doctrine of the Fall is not a theory which is intended to explain the existence of evil; on the contrary, it is the idea in which the inexplicable character of evil finds its clearest expression."⁷³ Barth virtually agrees with this point that the story of the Fall, as far as its form is concerned, is absurd; but it is really absurdity which illustrates the terrible absurdity of sin: "Sin is that which is not, described in the Genesis story as his hearkening to the voice of the serpent, the beast of chaos. Sin exists only in this absurd event."⁷⁴

Brunner even more severely criticizes Schleiermacher's doctrine of sin:

Here the basic error of Schleiermacher's conception breaks forth in grotesque clarity: that God-consciousness must be faith. On the contrary, God-consciousness is rather the presupposition of unbelief. For unbelief is not non-consciousness, but negation of the conscious, negation of the claim of God which is heard. The opposition of faith, merely higher self-consciousness is not sensuality but unbelief, disobedience, and faithlessness. ⁷⁵

In criticizing Schleiermacher's doctrine of sin, Barth takes a stand somewhat different from that of Brunner. As a matter of fact, in some or many respects, he energetically defends Schleiermacher. One cannot lose sight of the fact that Barth's own doctrine of sin is obviously developed, to a large extent, by following the direction in which Schleiermacher has pointed. Barth admits: "In the thesis of the knowledge of sin in the knowledge of Jesus Christ we follow the remarkable hints found in

73. The Mediator, p.144.

74. CD IV/1. p.410. cf. CD II/1. p.536.

75. "Hier bricht der Grundfehler der Schleiermacherschen Auffassung geradezu in grotesker Deutlichkeit hervor: Dass Gottesbewusstsein Glaube sein soll. Welt entfernt davon ist Gottesbewusstsein vielmehr die Voraussetzung des Unglaubens. Denn Unglaube ist nicht Nichtbewusstsein, sondern Neinsagen zum Bewusstsein, Neinsagen zum gehörten Anspruch Gottes. Der Gegensatz zum

our survey of Neo-Protestant theology first in Schleiermacher."⁷⁶ When one closely examines and compares their doctrine of sin (to a certain extent, we have actually done this), it is seen that Barth attributes the knowledge of sin to the revelation of God in Christ on the Cross, Schleiermacher to one's God-consciousness.⁷⁷ Here they hold in common that sin has no definite character, therefore no independent reality.⁷⁸ Actually Schleiermacher has a good starting-point in his doctrine of sin but he is unable to develop it. On the other hand, we see that Barth is not only corrective to Schleiermacher but also supplementary. It may not be completely wrong to say that this typical characteristic could even be generally applied in the relationship of Barth's theology to Schleiermacher's theology, but in the doctrine of sin (including the devil,⁷⁹ evil etc.), this is evidently, typically and unreservedly characteristic.⁸⁰

Viewed from this point, it is significant to compare their differences and similarities in this area in order to apprehend

Glauben bzw. höheren Selbstbewusstsein heisst nicht Sinnlichkeit, sondern Unglaube, Ungehorsam, Untreue." Mystik, p.225.

76. CD IV/1. p.391.

77. Barth: "Man kann aber nicht leugnen, dass er der Sünde diejenige Realität zugeschrieben hat, die er ihr im Rahmen seiner exklusiv subjektiven Betrachtung des christlichen Bewusstseins als solchen zuschreiben konnte. Nicht dass er sie in der Tat als Sündenbewusstsein beschreiben hat, ist zu beanstanden, sondern dass er das christliche Selbstbewusstsein (zuerst als Gnadenbewusstsein und dann auch als Sündenbewusstsein) nun doch nicht in dem Gegensatz zu interpretieren wusste, in welchem Gnade und Sünde sich im Werk des Heiligen Geistes am Menschen als der Subjektivierung des objektiven Wortes Gottes---sei es denn also; im 'christlichen Selbstbewusstsein' darstellt." KD III/3. p.371.

78. cf. CD IV/1. p.410. also: "Die eigentümliche Realität auch der Sünde konnte er so nicht sichtbar machen: weil er so auch die der Gnade nicht sichtbar machen konnte. Aber dass er das, was er als Sünde im Gegensatz zu dem, was er als Gnade verstehen konnte, als eine Realität sichtbar gemacht hat, das sollte man ihm nicht abstreiten." KD III/3. p.371.

79. Barth: "The devil is that being which we can define only as independent non-being." CD IV/1. p.422; cf. CD II/1. p.560.

their real differences and the real criticism of Schleiermacher made by Barth. In this line of thought, it is important to note that even Barth himself carefully and tirelessly presents Schleiermacher's doctrine of sin in his Dogmatik.⁸¹ According to Barth: "It must not be a doctrine of sin which is autonomous, which considers the matter and investigates and presents it in a vacuum, and therefore again abstractly."⁸² Therefore, one cannot simply judge Schleiermacher too light-heartedly for the serious reality of the nature of sin. It is easy enough to present the doctrine of sin, as Barth says, "in a vacuum," save to fill this emptiness with the concept of evil. One may not insist on or even assert its worth as an autonomous reality, when admittedly, to a certain extent, this autonomy is actually reflected by our rebellious existence. In this respect, one cannot understand the true nature of sin. According to Barth:

Sin is a reality---as the antithesis to God it is so almost as God Himself is, sui generis. But it is not an autonomous reality. As the No which opposes the divine Yes, it is only a reality related to and contradicting that Yes. Therefore it can be known---and all the horror of it can be known---only in the light of that Yes. In all its reality and horror it can never be a first word, nor can it ever be a final word. ⁸³

Certainly Barth departs from Brunner's critique here. Barth agrees with Brunner that sin is a negation of God's omnipotent grace, but disagrees with his failure to understand that

80. The writer thus ventures to characterize Barth's theology as corrective and supplementary to Schleiermacher's. In fact, this implies that there are actually included differences (in thought-content) and similarities (in thought-form) between them in their theology: e.g., revelation in Barth is a corrective to the rôle of intuition in Schleiermacher; faith corrects piety; Holy Spirit corrects the common spirit; the Word of God corrects the feeling of absolute dependence. In this respect, he would like to recommend von Balthasar who expertly traces these out. See von Balthasar, op. cit., pp.213ff.

81. KD III/3. pp.365-370.

82. CD IV/1. p.139.

83. Ibid., p.144. cf. KD III/3. p.381.

the Nihil is real too.⁸⁴ Notice Brunner's presupposition:

In order to perceive this (gulf between God and man) clearly we need to assume that sin is taken seriously, that it is not regarded as a merely accidental element in human existence, but that is seen in its real character, as Original Sin. To be a human being means to be a sinner. ⁸⁵

The following passage even more evidently testifies that Brunner takes sin as an independent reality: "This autonomy of man, this attempt of the Ego to understand itself out of itself, is the lie concerning man which we call sin."⁸⁶ It might be said that for Brunner, sin is a revolt against God's revelation and evil has only reality as a denial of God's will. But if he holds that there is a manifestation of God's will in creation, then sin or evil will have reality apart from the revelation in Christ which Barth will certainly deny. Thus, the difference between Brunner's and Barth's view of Nihil essentially lies in their different interpretation of revelation.

Indeed, if we expound Barth's view of Nihil, we discover that it is, to a certain extent, similar to Brunner's.⁸⁷ According to Barth, nihil has no autonomous reality; it depends upon or is related to what God does not will:

The nihil is what God does not will. It only lives by the fact that it is what God does not will. But just by this it lives: because not only God's willing, but also God's non-willing is powerful and can therefore not be without correspondence in reality. The correspondence in reality of the divine non-willing is the Nihil. ⁸⁸

84. cf. KD III/3. p.373.

85. The Mediator, p.498; cf. p.146. The Divine Imperative, p.62. God and Man, p.157.

86. The Word and the World, p.68; cf. p.73.

87. No wonder we see Barth criticizes Schleiermacher for his interpretation of the original nature of sin from the point of view of creation but not from that of the redemption in Jesus Christ. cf. Infra, p.217.

88. "Das Nichtigste ist das, was Gott nicht will. Nur davon lebt es, dass es das ist, was Gott nicht will. Aber eben davon

Barth affirms sin as the excluded element in God's will and work. Therefore, it only plays a negative part in it. He explains that God and sin are mutually exclusive. Sin has no positive place in God, and therefore plays no active part in His will and work. In fact, sin, living only from what God has rejected, is not created by God but arises only as the exponent of what God does not will.⁸⁹ Barth, then, criticizes Schleiermacher because his doctrine of sin confuses redemption with creation: "In this way Schleiermacher regards sin quantitatively as a mere deficiency, and consequently reconciliation (redemption) as the crowning of creation."⁹⁰ And he continues to criticize him for his assertion that God could have something to do with the origin of sin by pointing out that one must not say that God willed and created these impossible possibilities such as sin, evil, death and devil, otherwise their entire reality and character would be misapprehended. If we wishes to keep true to the facts, dogmatics has to be here "logically inconsequent."⁹¹ Barth reminds us that their existence is not to be perceived from creation, but only from God's grace in Jesus Christ. As he understands it, we know sin, evil, death and the devil "as an accompanying sign of His revelation."⁹² Therefore, sin is only to be understood as God's negation which appears to us as if it were ordained by Him. Barth affirms this: "Without this divine ordinance, sin could neither have being nor existence. And just

lebt es: weil und indem nicht nur Gottes Wollen, sondern auch Gottes Nichtwollen kräftig ist und also nicht ohne reale Entsprechung sein kann. Die reale Entsprechung des göttlichen Nichtwollens ist das Nichtigte." KD III/3. p.406. cf. p.375.

89. CD IV/1. p.409. Brunner, in this respect, more or less, agrees with Barth. See The Divine-Human Encounter, p.98.

90. CD I/1. p.469. cf. Credo, p.38. also Die Protestantische Theologie, p.416.

91. Credo, p.36.

92. Ibid., p.37.

this ordinance is, according to Schleiermacher's meaning and explanation, not to be understood abstracted from the fact that the will of God is the redemption of man, that it is therefore a good will."⁹³ Barth even suggests that the conception of God's negation, if it is to be applied to the doctrine of Christology, would have profound significance for the understanding of sin as a reality when it is related to His negation on one hand and for the understanding of grace as His omnipotent act in this negation on the other. However, Schleiermacher has missed this important and significant point here. No wonder Barth thus says about him:

And now one would like to suppose that unknown to Schleiermacher himself, this has had its importance for his peculiar doctrine of sin. For from the point of view of Christology it could indeed be clear that one had to understand sin first of all and decisively as from God, as the work of a mighty divine negation: as a reality which is not created but (as Schleiermacher says: 'ordained'), by the fact God opposes it. 94

According to Barth, the true nature of sin in the Bible is an indefinite cause or an alien power operating on the ground of rebellion. In Rom.5:12. we are told that sin, even in all its fearful reality, has only "entered into" the world. It is at a disadvantage when compared with even the most modest creature. Therefore,

93. "Ohne diese göttliche Verordnung konnte auch die Sünde weder Wesen noch Existenz haben. Und eben diese Verordnung ist ja nun nach Schleiermachers Meinung und Erklärung nicht abstrahiert davon zu verstehen, dass der Wille Gottes des Menschen Erlösung, dass er also ein guter Wille ist." KD III/3. p.374.

94. "Und nun möchte man vermuten, dass das für Schleiermachers eigentümliche Lehre von der Sünde, ihm selber unbewusst, seine Tragweite gehabt hat. Von der Christologie her konnte es ja klar sein, dass man die Sünde vor allem und entscheidend von Gott her, nämlich als das Werk einer mächtigen göttlichen Verneinung zu verstehen hat: als eine Realität, die dadurch -- nicht geschaffen, aber eben gesetzt (wie Schleiermacher sagt: 'verordnet') ist, dass Gott sich ihr entgegensetzt." KD III/3. p.376.

sin is not created by God. Though it can be present and active within the creation as an alien, it does not belong to it. Thus sin has no appointed place in God's creation but is only an interloping force against the creative will of God.⁹⁵ Berkouwer comments on this point:

It becomes plain why, for Barth, sin is a mystery. This mystery, this enigma, has nothing to do with the limits of our understanding, in the sense of the noetic incomprehensibility of sin. The mystery consists in the fact that sin is something which in the very nature of the case cannot be. This is the heart of Barth's doctrine of sin, which can be summarized in that strange expression: the ontological impossibility of sin. ⁹⁶

Can, therefore, the knowledge of sin be developed from our religious consciousness alone, if sin is not created by God but is revealed by Him in Jesus Christ? As Barth says that "the knowledge of sin can relate only to what we are told concerning our being and activity by Jesus Christ as the Mediator and Guarantor of the atonement, to what we have to say after Him, if that knowledge is to be serious."⁹⁷ Thus, one must be reminded that one cannot come to a general knowledge of sin.⁹⁸ In fact, Barth has affirmed that if the doctrine of sin or evil really has any Christian meaning at all, it must not be autonomous:

We must state: if anything in Christian knowledge and in Christian witness cannot be absolutely abolished, but only understood in connection with God's grace and in subordination to it then [it is] certainly evil. It opposes creation

95. CD IV/1. p.139.

96. The Triumph of Grace In the Theology of Karl Barth, pp.225f.

97. CD IV/1. p.141.

98. Barth: "Sin cannot be recognized and understood and defined and judged as sin in accordance with any general idea of man, or any law which is different from the grace of God and its commandment, the law of the covenant. If it takes place as a breach of the covenant, and not in any other way, it can be known only in the light of the covenant." Ibid., pp.140f.

and the covenant of God radically, but not independently. It exists not in itself, it exists only in this opposition. Therefore it exists indeed only 'alongside with good.' Not this statement as such as the darkening in Schleiermacher's teaching, [but] that he stated this so emphatically is rather the illuminating thing which must not be overlooked or denied by any critic of his teaching however necessary, and justified [his criticism] may be. 99

The writer would suggest that here Barth's statement is not unjustifiable, e.g., in Brunner's case, one can see that he affirms the solidarity of sin: "To deny the solidarity in sin is an egoistical perversion." As a consequence, one also can see that in what follows he must add this: "This solidarity in sinfulness cannot be proved empirically."¹⁰⁰ According to Barth, the indefinite conception of sin together with its dependent notion is all due to its very vain characteristics: it is "the self-surrender of the creature to nothing" on one hand and "it exists and is only in opposition to the will of God and therefore in opposition to the being and destiny of His creature" on the other. "It can only say No where God says Yes, and where in its own very different fashion the creature of God can also say Yes."¹⁰¹

99. "Wir müssen aber feststellen: wenn in der christlichen Erkenntnis und im christlichen Bekenntnis irgend etwas nicht absolut gesetzt werden darf, sondern nur im Zusammenhang mit Gottes Gnade und in der Unterordnung unter sie zu verstehen ist, dann destimmt das Böse. Es steht der Schöpfung und dem Bund Gottes radikal, aber nicht selbständig gegenüber. Es ist nicht an sich, es ist nur in dieser Gegensätzlichkeit. Es ist also in der Tat nur 'am Guten.' Nicht dieser Satz als solcher ist die Verfinsterung in Schleiermachers Lehre. Dass er diesen Satz so energisch vertreten hat, das ist vielmehr das Erleuchtende, das bei keiner noch so nötigen und berechtigten Kritik seiner Lehre übersehen und geleugnet werden dürfte." KD III/3. p.381.

100. The Mediator, p.145. cf. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.106. s.a. Brunner's doctrine of the Devil: "What the Bible says plainly is this: that there is a power of darkness, and that it is of great significance. As a force of a super-human kind it stands over against man. It is an 'objective reality,' i.e., it is a reality which is objectively encountered, not merely a reality within the mind." Ibid., p.143.

Sin, explained in this sense, means the "dark prelude or counterpart to the divine covenant and work of grace,"¹⁰² and not only has to do with God who is in covenant with man, but also has to do with man himself even as a sinner who is in covenant with God.¹⁰³ As Barth says: "Indeed, the covenant partner of God can break the covenant. The real man can deny and darken his reality."¹⁰⁴ And he concludes with this point: "Sin is therefore not merely an evil, but a breach of the covenant which as such contradicts God and stands under His contradiction. Sin is man's denial of himself in face of the grace of his Creator."¹⁰⁵ Therefore, Barth has the following passage which might serve to correct Schleiermacher's concept of evil and his attempt to trace its causes:

Whatever evil is, God is its Lord. We must not push our attempt to take evil seriously to the point of ever coming to think of it as an original and indeed creative counter-deity which posits autonomous and independent facts, competing seriously with the one living God and striving with Him for the mastery. Evil is a form of that nothingness which as such is absolutely subject to God. We cannot legitimately deduce this from a mere contrasting of the idea of evil with the idea of good. But we can say it in the light of the fact that in Jesus Christ in His death (the meaning of which is shown in His resurrection to be His victory and the liberation of man), we see evil overcome and indeed shattered and destroyed by the omnipotence of the love and wrath of God.

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101. CD IV/1. pp.139f. cf. p.79. s.a. "Es kann uns, wenn wir es in jener Beziehung, in seiner Entgegensetzung zu Jesus Christus sehen, nicht irgend ein grenzenlos mächtiges und wirksames Fabelwesen, kein zweiter negativer Gott sein. Es ist auch in dieser Hinsicht nicht absolut. Gott ist ihm gegenüber zuerst und zuletzt auf dem Plan. Es existiert ja überhaupt nur durch Gott, nur in der Kraft der göttlichen Verneinung und Verwerfung, des göttlichen Gerichts. Es hat nur den von ihm bestimmten Raum. Es ist nie über, immer nur unter ihm. Das Nichtige begrenzt ihn nicht, sondern er begrenzt das Nichtige. Seine Gnade ist mächtiger als Sünde, Übel und Tod." KD III/3. pp.380f.

102. CD IV/1. p.139.

103. Ibid., p.69.

According to Barth:

Evil in all its forms, even when it is unmistakably and incontrovertibly evil, might still be regarded as an accidental and external and improper and transitory determination of the being and activity of man. For it is quite true that it appears only in certain attitudes and actions. It is not always or in all men equally blatant or widespread or dangerous. 107

Thus far, judging from Barth's presentation of evil and the meaning which underlies it, he cannot entirely agree¹⁰⁸ with Brunner's verdict on Schleiermacher's complete rejection of the concept of the divine wrath, but he implicitly agrees with him¹⁰⁹ that Schleiermacher did not relate evil to divine love and wrath as he himself did: "We see evil overcome and indeed shattered and destroyed by the omnipotence of the love and wrath of God."¹¹⁰ Actually, Schleiermacher relates his idea of evil to good and sin; Barth to the omnipotence of the divine love and wrath.¹¹¹

104. "Gottes Bundesgenosse kann ja den Bund brechen. Der wirkliche Mensch kann seine Wirklichkeit verleugnen und verfeinern." KD III/2. p.244.

105. CD IV/1. p.140.

106. *Ibid.*, p.408.

107. *Ibid.*, p.403.

108. "So ist auch das eine greifbare Ungerechtigkeit, ihm vorzuhalten, er habe dem Begriff der Sündenstrafe 'ausweichen' wollen, Seine ganze Lehre vom Übel und von der Gerechtigkeit Gottes spricht dagegen. Man kann ihm vorhalten, dass er den Begriff des Übels zu eng mit dem der Sünde verknüpft habe, dass er das Übel überhaupt nur unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Sündenstrafe ins Auge fassen wollte und dass er es besonders durch die Art, in der er es getan hat--es besteht nach ihm überhaupt nur in einem durch die Sünde veranlassten menschlichen Missverständnis der in sich vollkommenen Welt--im Grunde geleugnet habe." KD III/3. p.373.

109. cf. *The Mediator*, pp.518f.

110. CD IV/1. p.408. cf. KD III/3. p.377.

111. In this line of thought, naturally, Schleiermacher will attempt to relate his idea of evil to its co-ordinate, good and thus arbitrarily to ascribe this antinomy of good and evil to God as its absolute divine causality. But to Barth, "whatever evil is, God is its Lord." Evil as the negative element must be subject to

The writer thinks that one question may be asked of Brunner: does Schleiermacher have a doctrine of evil; does this really imply nothing as to his true or complete rejection of the doctrine of divine wrath as mere anthropomorphism?¹¹² One must be reminded that Schleiermacher relates sin to evil as cause and effect (cf. Supra, pp.60f.); Brunner regards the divine wrath as the reaction of God to sin (cf. Supra, p.207.). Thus, evil (in Schleiermacher's interpretation) takes the place of the divine wrath (in Brunner's interpretation). The real problem involved in this aspect is that Schleiermacher has explained away the concept of a personal God, which is essentially different from what Brunner accuses him of. Evidently, in this respect, Brunner has promptly and directly reacted to Schleiermacher without taking notice of what Schleiermacher really had in mind, which Schleiermacher himself was perhaps not fully aware of. Brunner is, of course, acute enough to be able to point out that the mystic sometimes does not mean what he says;¹¹³ but why, then, is this implicit inconsistency involved?

God's will. It means what God has not willed and will not will. Barth, in order to evolve from this theory of negation a theory of more substantial character, has to point to the fact that it is Jesus Christ who fully illustrates this negation of God's omnipotent grace, i.e., God's wrath and love is seen in His death and in His Resurrection. But Schleiermacher, because he neglects to apply this fact of the historical revelation in Jesus Christ as the true and only reconciliation brought about by God to his remarkable theory of negation, is forced to work out a relativistic theory, in which sin and grace, evil and good are strictly related to each other as co-ordinates on the one hand, and sin and evil, grace and good co-related to each other as cause and effect on the other.

112. Mystik, p.343.

113. cf. Ibid., p.117.

According to Schleiermacher, sin or consciousness of sin is derived from the consciousness of God. To a certain extent, Barth seems to admit the truth of this process: "It is true enough that the knowledge of God alone includes within itself the knowledge of sin, and that this knowledge arises only in the confrontation of man by the majesty and holiness of God."¹¹⁴ Brunner seemingly admits the same.¹¹⁵ No doubt, Brunner and Barth principally or essentially agree with Schleiermacher at this point, but they think that the way he develops or presents it is wholly different or even wrong, for this tends to attribute to God the causality of sin. Barth asks how a will moved by the divine will can be a free will. If God's will be assumed to move the human will in any and all circumstances, is not God inevitably interpreted and understood as the author of sin?¹¹⁶ Even Brunner also says that "it is true that Sin and Creation remain distinct."¹¹⁷ However, at this point, Barth is much more cautious and does not connect sin even remotely with creation; he rather recognizes the process that the knowledge of sin is derived from the grace of God, which means that the knowledge of sin is exposed in the light of reconciliation. This is true as it is understood in the sense that the extreme pride of the sinner is clearly exposed by the most profound humiliation of the Reconciler. In this respect, Barth has virtually quoted Kähler, saying:

114. CD IV/1. p.363. cf. "Und indem unser Sein und Tun tatsächlich vom Gottesbewusstsein her so bestimmt, durch Gottes allmächtige Gnade so verneint ist, existiert die Sünde, indem wir selbst existieren." KD III/3. p.375.

115. "Knowledge of sin is possible only 'in the presence of God.' Thus we really know ourselves only when we really know God. It follows that the witness of Christian faith indicates a single point as the place where real God meets real man; where man becomes real to himself, because God becomes real to him; and this takes place here because in meeting God he recovers not only God but also what was lost." The Philosophy of Religion, p.78. cf. The Mediator, pp.265, 444. The Christian Doctrine of God, Dogmatics, I. p.17.

He tells us that the key which unlocks the secret of the basis of salvation 'must not be sought in the anxious self-judgment of man left to himself, as though this could measure the need for salvation and settle in advance the corresponding reassurance. For only the revelation of salvation can throw light on the state of alienation. It is at the cross of Christ that the justified man measures the significance of human sin.' 118

Brunner says similarly that sin can only be correctly understood in the light of Christian revelation.¹¹⁹ Both Brunner and Barth hold that from His revelation of gracious mercy and divine holiness alone we know we are sinners! We sin against God: "Against Thee alone, have I sinned!"¹²⁰ It is no accident that Barth inverted the traditional order of Law-to-Gospel to the Gospel first and Law the second.¹²¹

Pursuing this from another point of view, sin can be turned to serve the divine purpose since it has to do with the revelation of God. Camfield explains this: "Sin which rationally speaks of discontinuity and alienation now comes to speak of a new continuity and communion. He discovers the nearness of God, the nearness which is grace, in the very act which rationally speaks of farness, that is, in the sense of sin."¹²² But, as Barth has pointed out, once again, Schleiermacher puts it in a different way: "Sin...being the supporting element in the imperfection which still provisionally encumbers the whole, is a reality."¹²³

Brunner concludes his argument by saying that "the Biblical view of sin, however, replaces the phrase 'not-yet' by 'no longer.' Sin is not the primary phenomenon, it is not the

116. CD II/1. p.571.

117. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.18.

118. CD IV/1. p.392.

119. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.89.

120. Psalm 51:6.

121. Berkouwer, op. cit., p.321.

beginning, but it is a turning-away from the beginning, the abandonment of the origin, the break with that which God had given and established."¹²⁴

Because man is understood as the covenant partner of God,¹²⁵ Schleiermacher is criticized by Barth for not regarding the reality of sin as it actually takes place in an encounter and in the history of the relationship of God and man, so that, since between God and man there is no personal or direct conflict, naturally enough, sin has no serious character. And the negation of God's omnipotent grace only takes place in the God-consciousness of a religious mind. It is really a pity that Schleiermacher has missed developing this most significant point, when one notices how Barth writes:

What a prospect would be opened up if Schleiermacher were thinking of the negation which comes to man in his confrontation by Jesus Christ understanding sin as that which is excluded and condemned in Him, and therefore by the grace of God; as that which in its own dark way is real in his negative relation to Him! But as he sees it, the negation in which sin has its reality takes place only in our consciousness of God, not in an encounter and history of man with God. For Schleiermacher there is no such thing as a Christian in whom this encounter and history take place, who is therefore anything more than the embodied idea of an undisturbed and powerful God-consciousness fulfilling and controlling our consciousness of the world. The result is that God Himself has no direct or personal part in the negation which takes place in the human consciousness.¹²⁶

122. Revelation and The Holy Spirit, p.72.

123. CD I/2. p.134.

124. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.91.

125. Whitehouse: "Man's existence is determined as the being of God's covenant-partner. By nature we are covenant-partners, but this is only true and only knowable because, in the history of His free grace, God has made us His covenant-partners." The Christian View of Man, (An examination of Karl Barth's Doctrine) Scottish Journal of Theology, II. no.1. Mar.1949, pp.66f.

126. CD IV/1. p.376. cf. KD III/3. pp.376f.

Furthermore, concerning the mutual-conditioning of good and evil, grace and sin, with the reality of sin appearing alongside of the reality of grace, Barth points out that in this situation, the inevitable result is, that "for all the emphasis on its negative character sin is thought of positively."¹²⁷ Barth then puts this question: "But is it real sin?" For "with Schleiermacher the correct relativising of sin in relation to grace becomes its co-ordination with grace, its appraisal and justification and even its defence as the complement of grace."¹²⁸ On the other hand, if Schleiermacher negates the reality of sin, the reality of grace is equally undermined by his concept of negation, because according to him, sin and grace are related to a position of co-ordination or as states on the same level. Barth asks:

Can we say of real sin, as Schleiermacher says, that this thing which has no place belongs to a definite stage in the existence of man, and that in relation to this stage it was willed and posited by God? Conversely, can a grace which lives by its opposition to sin, which is referred and related to it, be real grace? Can a good which is only present with evil be a divine good? Are we speaking of real sin and real grace where there can be no mention of a real history, a real collision and conflict, a decision between the two?
129

Barth can only see that Schleiermacher's theorization ultimately involves a serious dilemma: there could be nothing which is negated; nothing which is affirmed as real! According to

127. CD IV/1. p.377.

128. Loc. cit. cf. "Hier tut sich in Schleiermachers Lehre offenbar ein Abgrund von Irrtum auf. Hier ist eben nicht gesehen oder völlig vergessen, dass jene Beziehung, jenes Verhältnis von Gnade und Sünde, in welchem die Sünde allerdings nur relatives Dasein, nur relatives Verhältnis ist, sondern ein Verhältnis der Entgegensetzung und des Streites -- des siegreichen Streites der Gnade gegen die Sünde, des ohnmächtigen Streites der Sünde gegen die Gnade, aber des Streites und in gar keinem Sinn ein Verhältnis des Friedens ist." KD III/3. p.382.

129. CD IV/1. p.377. cf. KD III/3. p.382.

Schleiermacher, neither sin or evil is really negated nor grace or good affirmed as real in spite of his strenuous effort at negating the one and affirming the other. For all his negations and affirmations exhaust each other by his theory of relativism between these two opposite concepts; and also by the strict coordination of their relation to each other. Schleiermacher's failure lies in the fact that he does not interpret it in terms of history and apply this wonderful theory to Christology. Therefore, instead of letting Jesus Christ bear this contradiction of sin and grace, Schleiermacher himself (or his theory itself) is caught in this contradiction. That is why Barth does not hesitate to write:

But in what is understood of the pious Christian consciousness by Schleiermacher, the opening in this direction is missing. In the reserved area into which alone he wanted to look, even the divine No to sin as such, as the No of God Himself and the divine Yes of grace as God's own Yes could not become visible. Therefore neither the danger of sin, the nihilness of the Nihil, nor the sovereignty of grace could be in it. Both could not be recognized in their truth, i.e., not in their encounter and history, but only in that peace which was really a poor one and not the peace of God which is higher than all reason. 130

Barth consequently sees in Schleiermacher's doctrine of sin no room left for either real sin or grace, at least not in the realm of Christian consciousness absolutely posited by Schleiermacher as the source of all theological knowledge.¹³¹

130. "Aber dem, das Schleiermacher unter christlich frommen Bewusstsein verstand, fehlte nun einmal die Öffnung nach dieser Richtung. In dem verschlossenen Raum, in den er allein hineinstarren wollte, konnte ja schon das göttliche Nein zur Sünde als solches, als das Nein Gottes selbst und das göttliche Ja der Gnade als Gottes eigenes Ja nicht sichtbar werden. In ihm konnte darum weder die Gefährlichkeit der Sünde, die Nichtigkeit des Nichtigen, noch die Herrlichkeit der Gnade, konnten beide nicht in ihrer Wahrheit, d.h. nicht in ihrer Begegnung und Geschichte erkennbar werden, sondern beide nur in jenem Frieden, der nun wirklich ein fauler Friede war und nicht der Friede Gottes, der höher ist als alle Vernunft." KD III/3. p.383. cf. p.398.

131. CD IV/1. p.377.

CHAPTER IX

THE RECONCILER VS. THE RELIGIOUS EXAMPLE

In the first instance, it is important to point out that the basic argument here is the distinctive difference between Brunner's and Barth's interpretation of Christ and that of Schleiermacher is that according to Brunner and Barth, God became man---Christ as God and man,---therefore the appearing of Christ is a mystery; whereas according to Schleiermacher, God is in Christ who is a man, and therefore, He is a cult of personality.¹

Barth, from the very outset, significantly points out that the work of reconciliation is a divine activity and the only true Reconciler is God Himself. As he says: "But it is God Who is Subject, the Actor in this event. Not man, not God and man, but God alone. The Word became flesh."² It is His majesty who has done something new and secured³ for fallen men in their lost condition of disastrous misery, something which is said to be qualitatively different from the accumulations or culmination of human achievements. Similarly, Brunner holds that Christ Himself as the Word of God is not to be regarded as the highest development of human existence, but a new category.⁴

In this work, which is unique, man is unable to be a co-partner of God. In the sphere of reconciliation, all attempts and efforts to divide this work of salvation between God and man are vain. It is God Himself alone who can achieve this work.

1. The Mediator, p.80.

2. Credo, p.66. cf. CD II/1. p.662.

3. Löffler, op. cit., p.315.

4. The Mediator, p.226; cf. p.86.

Barth says that the divine reconciliation as a unique event achieved alone in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ must be maintained. It is God who reconciles the world to Himself once and for all in Jesus Christ; it is also He who discounts our efforts to reconcile Him to the world and replaces our attempts to participate in His own redemptive work.⁵ Brunner explains that the true meaning of this work of God must not be diluted, for God has given the world something which is absolutely new, something which is decisively different from all the historical, ideal and human. Therefore, we can hardly describe this Word of revelation in adequate terms but only respond to or believe it.⁶ Barth also points out that God's reconciling work is very different from all idealistic optimism on the basis of nature and history or human experience. God as Reconciler is not to be deduced from all these as a mere rational object of ours, or as the principle of synthesis in our relation to the world.⁷ Camfield further explains that this divine event of revelation in Christ interrupts the temporal sequential settings in history. Though Christ enters into history, He is discontinuous with history.⁸

Therefore, Barth directs our attention to the reconciling God and His own redemptive work in Christ: "This one God and His one work and Word is Jesus Christ. He, the Son of the Father (in the unity of the Holy Spirit), is the face of God, the name of God, the form of God, outside which God is not God."⁹ It is because God has revealed Himself as the only Reconciler that all other reconciliations have been radically compromised by His

5. CD I/2. p.308; cf. God and Man, p.80.

6. The Word and the World, p.45.

7. CD II/1. p.77.

8. Revelation and the Holy Spirit, p.96.

9. CD IV/1. p.363.

revelation. He has set up His righteousness and peace which the world itself cannot have. He Himself is the origin and the climax of all true reconciliations.¹⁰ Therefore, God is the foundation of all reconciliation and redemption. Thus far, in what has been discussed above, Brunner agrees with Barth by saying that the aim of Christology should define how God establishes communion with man and sets up His Lordship over us in Jesus Christ.¹¹ And he adds: "genuine Christian revealed religion is an immediate encounter with God, but it is an encounter with God in the historical revelation of Jesus Christ."¹²

It is God who indirectly reveals or directly attests Himself in Jesus Christ; God Himself is the content of this revelation,¹³ the rejected and the elected,¹⁴ the true Reconciler who Himself is the righteousness of God. One must rely on Him or His sovereign grace only and not ²ply on the sentimental cherishing of our Christian piety as if it were of the first importance or the inner significance in the work or in the doctrine of redemption. Barth here criticizes Schleiermacher: "Theology in general and with it the doctrine of the atonement could only be the self-interpretation of the pious Christian self-consciousness as such, of the homo religiosus incurvatus in se,"¹⁵ or of the unreal self-deceptive schematism of imagination which is at bottom ex-human speculative vision. We must simply recognize Jesus Christ as the revelation of God and accept it as truth.

10. CD II/1. p.78.

11. Revelation and Reason, pp.113f. cf. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics II. p.322; p.349.

12. Revelation and Reason, p.255.

13. cf. The Divine-Human Encounter, p.104.

14. Barth: "In God's eternal counsel the election of rejected man did not take place without the rejection of elected man: the election of Jesus Christ as our Head and Representative, and therefore our election as those who are represented by Him." CD IV/1. p.516.

15. Ibid., p.153.

As Brunner says:

He is 'the event', as He is also, in the absolute sense, 'the Word'. For He breaks through all futility; He gathers up all human longing for the unattainable; He is the meaning which all history vainly sought; in Him the Eternal enters time; He is the fulfillment of all human desires; in Him the destiny of man is achieved, the goal is attained.¹⁶

Barth affirms that this revelation of God is truth in itself:

It is Jesus Christ, who is God's revelation, and the reality of this relationship in Jesus Christ is the work of the divine good-pleasure. God's revelation breaks through the emptiness of the movement of thought which we call our knowledge of God. It gives to this knowledge another side, seen from which it is not self-deception but an event in truth, because it happens by the truth.¹⁷

Thus, the difficulty here is twofold: one cannot sensually idolize Jesus Christ by either setting up the boundaries of God's presence in Him or denying the freedom of God's immanence in Him. Barth says:

God is free to be wholly inward to the creature and at the same time as Himself wholly outward: totus intra et totus extra and both, of course, as forms of His immanence, of His presence, of the relationship and communion chosen, willed and created by Himself between Himself and His creation. This is how He meets us in Jesus Christ.¹⁸

Therefore Barth has to affirm that the divine truth and freedom is in Jesus Christ:

It is truth as the revealed knowledge of God. It is truth in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ does not fill out and improve all the different attempts of man to think of God and to represent Him according to his own standard. But as the self-offering and self-manifestation of God He replaces and

16. Revelation and Reason, p.110.

17. CD II/1. p.74. cf. CD IV/1. p.53.

18. CD II/1. p.315. cf. The Mediator, p.308.

completely outbids those attempts, putting them in the shadows to which they belong. 19

Barth maintains the view that, while there is a way from Christology to anthropology, there is none from anthropology to Christology.²⁰ Our knowledge, then, can in no way define this revelation of God; our knowledge of Jesus Christ can in no way identify or master this mystery of revelation as if it could be explained in general terms. And he criticizes Schleiermacher:

It cannot be overlooked that the attempt of Schleiermacher to insert the Biblical and traditional Christology into a certain part of his system which harmonizes the antitheses of the finite and the infinite, and of the spirit and nature which was undertaken with so much love and art can hardly be called successful especially under this presupposition of a world-view. 21

Barth assures us that a simple trust in Christ is required: since Christology can only proceed from the fact of Jesus Christ, on which a proper awe for the mystery of Christmas is based, its function is to denote the event of Incarnation as one specific point in the world.²² Therefore, this event cannot be fully explained in decisively terms because we have no knowledge of any human possibility to comprehend this mystery.²³ Brunner holds similarly that it must be "through Christ, who Himself is the absolute wonder of God, the 'only begotten Son of God,' through His act, which is the unique reconciliation for all times and

19. CD I/2. p.308.

20. CD I/1. p.148.

21. "Es kann nicht übersehen werden, dass der mit so viel Liebe und Kunst unternommene Versuch Schleiermachers, die biblische und kirchliche Christologie seinem System der Harmonie der Gegensätze des Endlichen und des Unendlichen, des Geistes und der Natur an bestimmter Stelle einzugliedern, gerade auch von dieser weltanschaulichen Voraussetzung her kaum als gelungen bezeichnet werden kann." KD III/2. p.10.

22. CD I/2. p.233.

23. Credo, p.65.

all men."²⁴ Barth agrees with him where he writes: "It is one thing in the incarnation of the Word, in the once-for-all and unique assumption of human nature into unity with His eternal Son, into communion with His divine being."²⁵

Barth points out that Schleiermacher's mistake here is due to his doctrine of sin which is not interpreted as a rebellion against God, and therefore as a result the relation between God and man is not discontinuous:

According to Schleiermacher, the communion of man with God established by creation is not seriously compromised by sin. Therefore neither need the work of Christ consists in dead man being made alive again, nor need the unity of God and man in Christ be a new creation. For him Christ means simply the continuation and completion of the development initiated by the creation of man in the direction of an energizing of his God-consciousness. 26

Thus, ^{the} Reconciler can only be interpreted by Schleiermacher as an ethico-religious hero whose personality is typical for all men, his importance and significance to them is due to his influence over them. It is no wonder that Brunner's words here take on a severe tone: theologians cannot scientifically reduce messiah-Jesus to a mere extraordinary man. The depreciation of the Person of Christ is not simply a matter of intellectual foundations, but of prejudices, arguments derived from unbelief which shelters under the name of "science." Consequently, there would be no room left for the category of revelation in the New Testament sense.²⁷ Therefore, Brunner's verdict is: "Thus the

24. "Durch den Christus, der selbst das absolute Gotteswunder, der 'einziggeborene Sohn Gottes' ist --, durch seine Tat, die die einmalige Versöhnung für alle Zeiten und alle Menschen ist." *Mystik*, pp.334f.

25. CD II/1. p.315.

26. CD I/2. p.134.

27. *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption*, Dogmatics, II. p.253; cf. "It is therefore just as false to maintain that faith is born out of the historical picture of Jesus as it is to claim that it can arise apart from the picture of Jesus altogether." *The Mediator*, p.160.

Jesus Christ spoken of by Schleiermacher, is never the Christ of the Biblical and Reformed faith, but that of Schleiermacher, i.e., an unrecognizable, distorted Christ accomplished by the romantic concept of religion."²⁸ Brunner judges that Schleiermacher sees, in Jesus, religious behaviour represented in ideal perfection, all on the plane of human possibilities, with Jesus still holding a comparatively singular position as the highest representative of human religion, still on our side but hardly over against us as the revelation of the "wholly other" Word of God.²⁹ Along this line of thought, Barth also points out that the Incarnation as mystery is not grounded upon any human necessity or historical possibilities:

The becoming [the Word was made flesh] asserted of Him is not, therefore, to be regarded as an element in the world process as such. It rests upon no inner necessity of human history, nor is it to be understood as having its source in any such necessity. There is no condition of the world or man which can form the basis of a claim or capacity whereby this becoming can have been predicted. This becoming cannot be brought into connexion with creation. It cannot be regarded as one of its evolutionary possibilities.³⁰

Brunner and Barth hold that although this mystery of revelation has actually happened as a free event within the temporal and historical sphere,³¹ yet its true and original meaning

28. "So ist doch der Jesus Christus, von dem Schleiermacher redet, nimmermehr der Christus des biblisch reformatorischen Glaubens, sondern ein Schleiermacherischer, d.h. ein durch jenen romantischen Religionsbegriff vollständig, bis zur Unkenntlichkeit, veränderter Christus," Mystik, p.197.

29. The Word and the World, p.39.

30. CD I/2. p.134. cf. "Der christliche Glaube ist nun einmal ein Element, das sich, wenn es mit den Weltanschauungen vermischt wird, auch in den grössten Verdünnungen bemerkbar, und zwar störend, zersetzend, als Bedrohung ihrer Fundamente, bemerkbar macht. Sofern er Glaube an Gottes Wort ist und sofern er sich als solcher auch nur in einem Bruchteil treu bleibt, kann er ja nicht Glaube an die Bilder, die Weltbilder werden, wird er diesen immer nur widerstehen können." KD III/2. p.10.

31. The Mediator, p.30; cf. Revelation and Reason, p.31; also: CD II/1. pp.10, 643.

must not be obscured or violated by human co-ordinates or interpreted in terms of the parallels of modern jargon which pretends to be able to comprehend it directly or to master the original and proper content of it as a kind of knowledge which underlies human experience. Thus the freedom of divine immanence³² is frozen by our self-legitimized theory. Barth, on the other hand, sees Christology as the indispensable basis and criterion for interpreting and apprehending God's freedom. Any theory of God's relationship to mankind and the world may be tested in light of whether it also may be understood as an interpretation of the fellowship and relationship which is created and sustained in Jesus Christ.³³ It may be seen why Brunner criticizes all the philosophical or religious doctrines implying no ^{such} divine intrusion as the Saving-history into history.³⁴ Fundamentally Barth holds the same view, for he says that Christology meets the doctrine of sin like a vertical line crossing a horizontal.³⁵ Brunner continues his criticism by pointing out that the divine activity is consequently dissolved into time process, substituting the eternal principle of the temporal sphere for the eternal truth.³⁶ No wonder Barth also asks: "How could Christ ever become possible as the product of an immanent world evolution? No, the Word's becoming flesh is not a movement of the creature's own. Like creation itself, it is a sovereign divine act, and it is an act of lordship different from creation." As he said: "God's word becoming a creature must be regarded as a new creation."³⁷

32. cf. CD IV/1. p.417; CD II/1. p.319.

33. CD II/1. p.320.

34. Revelation and Reason, p.397.

35. CD IV/1. p.643.

36. Revelation and Reason, p.397.

37. CD I/2. p.134. cf. Torrance: "The most characteristic aspect of Barth's theology is his emphasis upon the new humanity in Jesus Christ Incarnate, Crucified, and Risen, and who will come again to renew the heaven and the earth." Karl Barth, The Expository Times, LXVI. Oct.1954-Sept.1955. p.209.

Therefore, in this respect, Barth points out that Schleiermacher's starting point is wrong,³⁸ and Brunner points out that the fundamental mistake in Schleiermacher's Christology is not simply that he is blind to the fact that Jesus Christ is a *Kαὶ νῦν κτίσις* by God, but that he has reversed the proper order of what is first and what is second. This mistake, of course, is rooted in his concept of revelation. (As has been pointed out, it is but human discovery.) Naturally Schleiermacher will follow his basic principle and arrive at this conclusion. Brunner writes: "There the subjective is the first, and the objective --- if there is such a thing at all --- is the second. But here without doubt, the objective is the first, and the subjective --- even [when] this [is] not a feeling --- is the second. The Word is the first and faith, the attitude towards it, is the second."³⁹

38. "The being of Jesus Christ is deduced and interpreted from the being of man and the world instead of the other way round, if we derive the atonement from creation instead of creation from the atonement, if we described as the first and eternal Word of God that which we think we can recognize, i.e. postulate and maintain as the final word on the evolutionary process of finite being and development. No ideas or pronouncements on a supposedly attainable or attained *telos* of the immanent development of creaturely being can do justice to the *telos* and therefore the beginning, revealed in Jesus Christ. We can not overlook the fact that in relation to Jesus Christ the New Testament speaks of a new creation (Gal.6:15, II Cor.5:17), of a new man created by God (Eph.4:24), not of a continuation of man but of a 'new birth' (Jn.3:3), and indeed of a new heaven and a new earth (Rev.21:1. II Pet.3:13). And Jesus Christ is not regarded as the fulfilment and highest form of the first Adam, but in sharp antithesis He is described as the last Adam ("The first man is of the earth, earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven," I Cor.15:44f)." CD IV/1. pp.49f.

39. "Dort ist das Subjektive das erste, und das Objektive ---wenn es denn überhaupt so etwas gibt -- das zweite. Hier aber ist ohne allen Zweifel das Objektive das erste, und das Subjektive -- auch dies kein Gefühl -- das zweite. Das Wort ist das erste und der Glaube, die Stellungnahme zu ihm, das zweite." *Mystik*, p.132.

It is clearly seen that both Brunner and Barth emphasize that the appearing of Jesus Christ is a historical revelation, a unique event, and He is not a figure of historical development, the sum of human achievements, nor the religious ideal, nor the living symbol of ethics which is represented by His purest and most complete humanity as an example, but it is a new conception to mankind, a divine mystery,⁴⁰ a revelation of God in time,⁴¹ the very God and the very man. It is God Himself who enters into humanity. Thus although this Son of God, who is the Word which was made flesh as the flesh of our flesh,⁴² among men as man, the true and actual man, the crucified and risen, yet all attempts or efforts to equalize or to determine His being as the rational object of our theoretical faith in terms of the plane of human level or in the kenotic sense of the theory⁴³ are not only illusory but also bound to fail.⁴⁴ The decisive argument here is that the Incarnation is a divine act, at bottom, a divine secret. It is God Himself who originates this mystery, man has no right to question God's right. Man, after all, is His creature, he must be obedient to his Creator-Lord and simply accept such an event as truth in faith. Thus Torrance writes that "the great heart of Barth's theology is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. In Him who is true God and true Man in one person we are confronted with a mystery that is more to be adored than

40. The Mediator, p.217; cf. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.335.

41. Brunner: "He Himself is the Revelation. Divine revelation is not a book or a doctrine; the Revelation is something that happens, the living history of God in His dealing with the human race." Revelation and Reason, p.8. cf. Philosophie und Offenbarung, p.16.

42. CD II/1. p.403.

43. KD IV/2. p.93.

44. The Mediator, pp.360f; cf. D.M. Baillie, God was in Christ, (An Essay on Incarnation and Atonement). London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1955, pp.94ff.

expressed."⁴⁵ Indeed, man can argue with man, but here he has no choice; he cannot argue with God. This belongs to the very nature of Christian faith. Says Brunner: "We are summoned to stand in humble, reverent silence in the presence of a real mystery, not in the presence of an illusion."⁴⁶ And he adds:

It pleased God to make known to mankind the secret of His will in Jesus Christ, to reveal Himself in the Incarnate Word. But this revelation, although it was given once for all, remains God's right and God's deed, and hence reserved to Himself alone. It is not and never can become something at man's disposal. ⁴⁷

According to Schleiermacher's doctrine of Christ, there is no need for the unity of God and man in Him as a new creation, because he only ascribes to Jesus Christ the causality of religious feeling, as far as His work is concerned. In this case, Jesus Christ is only viewed as a religious example, and man ultimately possesses a kind of immanent value, and Jesus Christ is but conceived as the "Original Image" (Urbild) of piety. Brunner says: "This idea of the perfect example does not reveal a divine mystery to man; rather, here man merely sees the perfection of his own religious or moral faculty or possibility."⁴⁸ In this direction, Barth can only see that one result is inevitably involved, i.e., deification of the creature. He employs this term against Modernism. First he explains:

For when we are speaking of Jesus Christ, this Word does not possess its human-ness as an 'object of manifestation' alongside itself. It is God's revelation to us in its human-ness; inseparable from it, but in such a way that this human-ness is not only inseparably linked with the Word on its own account, but also receives its character as

45. Karl Barth, The Expository Times, LXVI. Oct.1954-Sept. 1955. p.208.

46. The Mediator, p.276. cf. p.528.

47. The Divine-Human Encounter, p.16. cf. Revelation and Reason, p.31. Vom Werk des Heiligen Geistes, p.22.

48. Revelation and Reason, p.100. cf. p.303.

revelation and its power to reveal solely from the Word and therefore certainly cannot in itself, abstractly and directly, be the object of faith and worship. Where it is made, such an object, recollection of really intended 'material object' is a belated revelation void of force.⁴⁹

Then Barth criticizing the modernist view which makes Jesus Christ a mere religious hero, rejects it as the deification of creation.⁵⁰

The objection which Brunner and Barth make against Schleiermacher is that he rather appeals to the analogies of natural process or human possibilities, and does not know that Jesus Christ is the revelation of God, a mystery which is enigmatic to human discovery.⁵¹ According to them, certainly the historical revelation, this Incarnate Word of God, includes all these. Brunner says that "so far as the historical and visible side of His life is concerned it is quite natural and historical."⁵² But the way Schleiermacher presents it is defective or surely liable to cause misunderstanding. Barth, of course, admits the complete humanity of Jesus who is a greater man than all the others, but he has to emphasize that He is qualitatively different from all of them because His singular person differentiates Him from them as their true Lord.⁵³ Barth then affirms his own viewpoint and criticizes Schleiermacher for his defective view of Christ which insufficiently presents a correct picture of this special work of God:

Our first point is simply that although this new work [historical revelation] takes place within the sphere of the creation and continuous presentation of the world, it is still a special work, and not directly coincident with the other. Nor can it be understood merely as the continuation

49. CD I/2. p.138.

50. Loc. cit.

51. CD II/1. p.56; cf. CD IV/1. p.81; Mystik, p.143.

52. The Mediator, p.317.

53. CD IV/1. pp.159f; cf. p.208.

and crown of the work of creation (as Schleiermacher would have it) although it certainly is this as well; for necessarily God the Creator is alive and active in it, continuing and completing His work. On the contrary, God so surpasses Himself in this new work that it is only here that He can really be known, as it were retrospectively, as God the Creator. 54

We see that Brunner virtually holds the same:

It is also true of the miracle of revelation that it too includes all the 'lower' spheres of existence, and does not eliminate or exclude them...It is possible to describe the life of Jesus in purely human, natural 'immanent' terms, although in so doing it is not revelation that is described. This description is not false; only---just as in the case of the work of art---it misses, precisely, the decisive point, namely, that Jesus is the Christ, that He is the revelation. 55

Those who interpret this Incarnate Word of God merely in a rational and ethical sense ought never to stop at this level of the temporal and historical, but must go further. Basically it is presupposed that this divine mystery is beyond the range of our thought, an inconceivable wonder; otherwise there would be no faith and revelation, but only theory and discovery. According to Brunner and Barth, the knowledge of Christian faith actually means acknowledgment. They both hold the same view: our knowledge of Jesus Christ could not at all determine its object, but rather, is determined by it, if the incarnation of the Word is objectively real for us. Therefore, the knowledge of this kind actually means acknowledgement and its expression is termed confession (Barth).⁵⁶ Thus, Jesus Christ is the incarnate Word which is alive and above us. To acknowledge Him as the living Word of God constitutes the Christian faith(Brunner)⁵⁷

54. CD II/1. pp.506f.

55. Revelation and Reason, pp.303f. cf. The Divine Imperative, p.241.

56. CD I/2. p.173.

57. The Theology of Crisis, p.37.

What does all this actually mean? Does this really suggest that God's truth is far more true than our truth; God's Word is greater than man's word, so that His truth necessarily appears as a mystery or even paradox to us?⁵⁸ Can we at least say in our human language (this poor language) that God is even other than our extended "I"? Here there is no doubt, according to Brunner and Barth, they cannot start and stop at this level as Schleiermacher does, but they must carry out their conception further: even in this event of Incarnation, He is no other than the Creator-Lord. Actually from the Christian's point of view, his faith in revelation does not mean that it must be rationally explainable to him, if faith really means faith at all.⁵⁹

Finally as Barth asserts: "At all costs we must make it clear that an ultimate mystery is involved here. It can be contemplated, acknowledged, worshipped and confessed as such, but it cannot be solved, or transformed into a non-mystery."⁶⁰ Camfield points out that the unique origin of Christ cannot be explained in terms of rational truth or the universal law of life because it is the transcendental eternal appeared in the temporal and contingent.⁶¹ Thus, the appearing of Christ is, at bottom, to be regarded as the concealing of His true being as the Son or Word of God.⁶² Brunner affirms the original character of this miracle as unique and incomparable: since Jesus is the "Only Begotten," He can only be One of His kind.⁶³ Therefore a paradox

58. Kierkegaard assures us: "This position cannot be mediated, for all mediation comes about precisely by virtue of the universal; it is and remains to all eternity a paradox, inaccessible to thought." Fear and Trembling and The Sickness unto Death, (Translated with Introduction and Notes by Walter Lowrie) Doubleday Anchor Books, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1954. p.66.

59. Mystik, p.144.

60. CD I/2. pp.124f.

61. Revelation and the Holy Spirit, p.74; cf. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.333.

62. CD IV/1. p.163.

63. Revelation and Reason, p.101; cf. The Mediator, p.248.

is possible because it means one solitary fact. In this connection it is worth while to note that the aesthetic approach in the interpretation of religion rooted in individuality is superseded. Brunner writes:

The miracle of the revelation in the person of Jesus Christ is the unique historical event which has taken place once for all; it is therefore without comparison, and, because it is without comparison, 'without security' it stands there, confronting thought. This implies the possibility of rejecting it as 'folly' and 'offence.' 64

Therefore, Camfield states that God and man united in Jesus Christ is the divine-human communion in which God meets man in His sovereign grace, and man meets God in faith and his obedience.⁶⁵ Brunner concludes at this point by saying that in principle no matter how true or profound are those human interpretations of Jesus on the historical plane, they differ entirely from the original witness of Christ in the New Testament which can only be gained through the sovereign grace of God and our humble faith which illuminates us for seeing this vision of His special grace.⁶⁶

Barth insists that the origin of this divine mystery of revelation is really supernatural and the Virgin birth is the sign of the occurrence of such a mystery. Schleiermacher merely neutralized the special and distinctive concept in this aspect of the mystery, and the sign as a miracle which is here designated is thus explained away. Barth therefore criticizes him:

We simply comment: 'The general concept of a supernatural generation' is quite enough to denote what Schleiermacher means by the mystery of Christmas as he sees it, namely, the miraculous manifestation of a creative activity united to the activity of the human species to produce the peculiar

64. Revelation and Reason, p.307. cf. The Word and the World, pp.36f; The Mediator, pp.184, 240.

65. Reformation Old and New, p.75.

66. The Mediator, p.76.

being Jesus Christ. In other words, this thing signified needs no sign at all. What Schleiermacher calls 'a new creation' is really the completion of the creation of the human species, a completion the necessity of which we may know a priori, and the achievement of which may therefore be postulated in the union of the divine with the human in Christ as 'a supernatural generation.' Of this we are not forced to say that it is new, and so it does not require a sign. 67

Barth does not like Schleiermacher's denunciation of the credal statement about the two natures of Christ. He has done injustice to the simple and plain expression of "Primitive Christology" and his misunderstanding of the purpose in the formula is clearly seen by Barth:

Its purpose in this formula was to fix the fact regarding the subject active in revelation. Its purpose was not to explain this fact. Neither by the formula itself, nor by its pronouncement upon the miracle of Christmas, did it in any sense pretend to have mastered the mystery of revelation. The purpose of this formula and of its narrower explanations and of its pronouncements upon the miracle of Christmas was simply to state that (even in his thinking) man has no power over this reality. At this point he can only begin to think, and only describe the beginning of his thinking. 68

Thus, Barth points out that Schleiermacher's denunciation here is inadequate and mistaken. He judges the credal expression of natures according to his own exposition of the word "nature," and thus his critique of it does not come to the point, for each intends a different meaning of the word. In this connection even the Scriptural usage of "nature" is different from that of Modernism. Along these lines, Barth again criticizes Schleiermacher:

It [Primitive Christology] found Him [Jesus Christ] attested in the New Testament as Lord of the complete man, as bringer of life to both sides of his existence, as the Reconciler of man's being. It was this being of man in its unity and in its totality that was meant when it spoke of the 'human nature'

67. CD I/2. p.180.

68. Ibid., p.126.

in Christ; and, on the other hand, the divine being in its unity and in its totality, when it spoke of the 'divine nature' in Christ. These two basic concepts have therefore nothing to do with the narrower concept of 'nature', of which the modernist Protestant is 'the sum of everything that is corporeal, that goes back to what is elementary, in its various divided appearance, in which all that we denote by it is mutually conditioned, over against what is divided and conditioned, in this way, we posit God as the unconditional and absolutely simple' (Schleiermacher, *Der Chr. Glaube* s96. l.). But what he calls 'nature' in this sense is contained in the concept of early dogmatics, *Θεία Φύσις*, natura divina, only so far as God, because He is God, is also Lord over the physis in this narrower sense. And what he calls 'nature' is contained in the concept of *ἄνθρωπινη Φύσις*, natura humana, in the sense of early dogmatics, only so far as man (because he is man) is not only soul or spirit but body too, because he exists not only spiritually and morally, but corporeally also. Quite simply, then, it was an optical illusion, when modern theologians, themselves interested only in the spiritual and moral, thought they could catch out the primitive theologians (who were admittedly also interpreted in the physical) in an exclusive interest in the physical. 69

Brunner warns us: "Every attempt to destroy this quality of His Being, which is defined in the 'Two Natures' doctrine, weakens and finally completely destroys the scriptural belief in revelation."⁷⁰

One may ask whether Brunner agrees with Barth's criticism of Schleiermacher on the supernatural generation of the Redeemer? No! Brunner departs from Barth's opinion on the doctrine of Virgin birth. He states that he is indifferent to this explanation of the mystery: "We have no desire to attempt to explain the way in which God works His marvels; we simply stand amazed before the Fact itself, without thinking it necessary to combine with this certain inquisitive biological ideas."⁷¹ One cannot lose sight of the fact that Brunner's rejection of "the theory of Virgin birth," as he calls it, reflects, even remotely, a true sign of the relationship of his theology to that of Schleiermacher. It

69. *Ibid.*, p.128.

70. *The Mediator*, p.248.

71. *Ibid.*, p.326.

is not only reactionary, but to a certain extent, even similar.⁷²

Now we turn to discuss the fact that Jesus Christ is the true Mediator who is the living Saviour of eternal Light. Brunner says: man is no longer "a fixed star shining by its own light, as he before imagined himself to be, but a star with borrowed light."⁷³ This is important, for there is no other way in which that Jesus Christ can be described as a Mediator in the true sense of the word. Otherwise it is certain that one will hold a superficial concept of immanental value and it is not difficult to expose this. Thus Brunner writes:

The religious hero will always be honoured, it is true, for through him alone will a thousand others first perceive what the religious life really means. But he himself will desire that all should become what he is, and his influence will be shown by the fact that others will become more and more independent of him; all that he has to do is to 'wake them out of their first sleep' (Schleiermacher). He is a 'mediator' only until others have reached sufficient independence and maturity. This we express by saying he has no authority. He is only primus inter pares.⁷⁴

In this discussion, one important point is involved. Is this Mediator a living person or a historical religious hero who has long since been dead? Barth first questions this variant approach:

This would be a fantastic and not very helpful statement if it simply meant that He is something like this for certain men of His own age, and that He can be something of

72. Concerning the life of Jesus: cf. Revelation and Reason, p.189; The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.257; The Divine Imperative, p.241; with Christian Faith, pp.63, 387f, 427. Concerning the Virgin birth: cf. The Mediator, pp.322ff. with Christian Faith, pp.404ff. In this respect, the writer would suggest that particularly in The Mediator, also in many respects, in The Divine Imperative, innumerable examples could be found to illustrate the fact that Brunner's theological thought in its form is reactionary and similar to that of Schleiermacher's. cf. infra, pp.

73. God and Man, p.82.

74. The Mediator, p.219; cf. p.89.

the same for certain men of other ages by their recollection of Him, by the tradition and proclamation concerning Him, by a sympathetic experience of His person, or by some form of imitation of His work. He would then be alive only in virtue of the life breathed into Him as a historical and therefore a dead figure by the men of other ages. 75

To correct Schleiermacher we assert that Christ is the living Saviour for all men of all ages. He is the resurrected Lord; He has life in Himself (Jn.5:26). In His own omnipotence, He is the same forever as the true Mediator between God and man because He is here and now as He was there and then.⁷⁶ Brunner also corrects this with a statement that:

The existence of the God-man, as such, constitutes revelation and salvation. This is why He is called the Mediator, not primarily on account of His work, but because in Him the eternal Word is present, in Him the eternal Light enters into our world, because in Him the eternal purpose of God, the mystery of God becomes known, because in Him we can see God. 77

Brunner further says in criticism that the mystic does not need a mediator, all he needs is his mystical view and experience which is immediate and not mediated;⁷⁸ "all that the modern man expects from Jesus is assistance."⁷⁹ As he says: "One needs it for stimulation; however, once the interior life is on its way, it unfolds itself from its native power and no longer needs an alien help. Therefore it does not come to a dependent condition which is permanent and fundamental."⁸⁰

75. CD IV/1. p.314.

76. Loc. cit.

77. The Mediator, p.404. cf. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.374.

78. Mystik, p.390; cf. The Mediator, pp.31f.

79. The Mediator, p.89.

80. "Man braucht sie zur Anregung; aber ist erst einmal das innere Leben im Gang, so entfaltet es sich aus eigener Kraft und braucht keine fremde Hilfe mehr. Also zu einem dauernden und grundlegenden Abhängigkeitsverhältnis kann es hier nicht kommen." Mystik, p.121.

In this case, Brunner points out that the importance of Christ, according to this conception, and the redeeming element in His work is the teaching of Jesus which stirs the depth of humanity: it does not really apply to His person but to His teaching. It is primarily the teaching, the truth itself, as the redeeming element. Brunner continues:

This process is conceived in such a way that the connection with the Person is not necessary or unconditional, and the personal element declines in proportion to the strength of the interior life of the person concerned. The distance between the productive and the receptive element is relative; there are degrees of approximation until complete assimilation has been attained. Here the thought is the same as that expressed by Schleiermacher in his fifth Speech, where he says that religious heroes in general are needed so long as we are not strong enough to stand on our own feet. 81

In the light of the above discussion, on the whole, Barth notices that it is because Schleiermacher does not present the true meaning of the Biblical revelation that he thinks that one can comprehend the Person of the Redeemer, i.e., the presence of God in Christ, from the viewpoint of His humanity by an interpretation of continuity, Barth writes:

The 'fairest Lord Jesus' of mysticism, the 'Saviour' of pietism, Jesus the teacher of wisdom and friend of man in the Enlightenment, Jesus the inner meaning of exalted humanity in Schleiermacher, ...looks at least pretty doubtful in the light of what in the Old testament sense is a sacrilegious profane intrusion, whereby it was believed possible, so to speak, to come to an understanding about the presence of God in Christ, to take possession of it with the aid of a few conceptions emanating from the humanity. We may at once conclude from the fact that such attempts at secularisation are not undertaken in the New Testament that in it, too, the humanitas Christi comes under the reservation of God's holiness, i.e. that the power and the continuity in which the man Jesus of Nazareth, according to the testimony

81. The Mediator, p.85. cf. p.86.

of the evangelists and apostles, was in fact the revealed word, consisted here also in the power and continuity of the divine action in this form and not in the continuity of this form as such. 82

"According to Schleiermacher," Barth adds, "Christ is the Revealer and Redeemer insofar as he causes the higher life."⁸³ Brunner also points out the modernist view of Jesus Christ:

The union of Christ with God is purely ethico-religious. Thus in so far as the problem of His Person is considered there is no idea of a revelation in the Biblical sense of the word at all, hence no idea of decision, of the essential and unique, of the crisis in history which either happens once or not at all. The man Jesus is in no sense really the Redeemer. For no human being can be a redeemer since he himself stands in need of redemption. 84

When traced back to Schleiermacher's original interpretation of Christian life, the reconciliation is not based on the forgiveness of sin but actually on the destiny of a gradual progress of human development which is due to the influence of the ethico-religious life of Jesus, i.e., his historical greatness in terms of relative magnitude.⁸⁵ Therefore, it is also Brunner's criticism that all modern men expect, at bottom, is not a forgiveness of sin based on the fact of atonement, but a forgetting of sin based on the approximation to the example set up by Christ. Thus, as far as our Christian life is concerned, sin is not to be forgiven, but forgotten:

82. CD I/1. p.371.

83. "Christus ist nach Schleiermacher insofern der Offenbarer und Erlöser, als er das höhere Leben bewirkt." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.418. cf. Camfield, Reformation Old and New, p.71.

84. The Mediator, p.277.

85. Barth: "Schleiermachers Christologie gipfelt in dem Nachweis einer quantitativen Überlegenheit, Würde und Bedeutung Christi gegenüber unserer eigenen Christlichkeit, wobei eben damit, dass es sich bei ihm nur um ein unvergleichlich grösseres Quantum dessen handeln soll, was wir als unsere Christlichkeit auch in uns selbst vorfinden, gesagt ist, dass dieser Nachweis

According to Schleiermacher, reconciliation through Christ consists in the fact that under the influence of Jesus the 'frustrations of life' which are caused by sin, are increasingly overcome, and that 'the longer and the more continuously we are led by Christ the more we forget sin' (Gll.II. sl08.12). Thus in this view reconciliation (or atonement) consists in the removal of the difficulties and frustrations of ordinary life. Guilt is something which is best forgotten.
86

Barth has also pointed out that Schleiermacher presents the person of Christ as the religious dynamic and that His redemptive work is due to His influence over the religious:

For the dignity of Christ consists in His absolutely powerful God-consciousness which is co-existent with His self-consciousness and excludes all sin. That the religious consciousness is a Christian one means that it is one related to Christ, and that again means that what in Christ is realized in original and perfect form (ideal) shall gradually also be imparted to it. This is redemption through Christ. 87

Thus, according to Schleiermacher: "Christ's function is simply to expound and assert the continuity of human nature, which was originally good and unbroken in its God-consciousness."⁸⁸

Obviously, Schleiermacher is opposed by Brunner and Barth with a charge that he has taken a different view of man here. It is the natural man who relies on nothing from outside except the first stimulation; then he can work things out according to a principle which is universal within the sphere of immanence.

letztlich an die Behauptung, die Selbstbehauptung unserer eigenen Christlichkeit gebunden ist." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.422; cf. The Mediator, p.88.

86. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.288. cf. The Word and the World, p.50.

87. "Christi Würde besteht nämlich in dem in seinem Selbstbewusstsein mitgesetzten, schlechthin kräftigen, alle Sünde ausschliessenden Gottesbewusstsein. Dass das fromme Bewusstsein ein christliches ist, will sagen, dass es ein auf Christus bezogenes ist, und das wiederum will sagen, dass ihm das, was in Christus in ursprünglicher und vollkommener Gestalt (urbildlich) wirklich ist, allmählich ebenfalls mitgeteilt wird. Das ist die Erlösung durch Christus." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.416.

88. CD I/2. p.134.

With this view Schleiermacher has turned the authority of the Word into relative and historical significance for he has reserved room for that which can redound to the natural man's credit and merit. But both Brunner and Barth see that the Word of God is "not an impersonal 'principle,' nor an Idea of God, but it is the personal Being of God, the Divine Logos."⁸⁹ First says Brunner:

Christian faith is not without relationship to the self-manifestation of God in the Word in time. Christian faith is faith in Jesus Christ. This implies that the becoming-one which is meant in faith, the reconciliation, is such a personal event that in it the personal relationship remains a relationship and does not become a substantial union or just an identity. ⁹⁰

Then Barth:

What we see in Jesus Christ is that creation, too, and reconciliation and redemption are a real act, but that they are the real act of God's free love. We learn this in faith and obedience to Him, to His person and work. We recognize it in the grace of His revelation and reality. ⁹¹

And Barth makes the following objection to Schleiermacher: "For the proper and primary objection to Schleiermacher's conception must be to the effect that what he calls redemption through Jesus Christ is not a free, divine act of lordship. The Word of God is not seriously regarded by him as the Subject of the redeeming act, but as one of the factors in the world-process."⁹²

89. The Mediator, p.297. cf. CD IV/1. p.53.

90. "Christlicher Glaube ist nichts ohne Beziehung zur Selbstoffenbarung Gottes in der Zeit, zum Wort. Christlicher Glaube ist Glaube an Jesus Christus. Damit ist gesagt, dass die Einswerdung, die im Glauben gemeint ist, die Versöhnung, ein solches personhaftes Ereignis ist, in dem die persönliche Beziehung eine Beziehung bleibt und nicht zur substantiellen Vereinigung oder gar zur Identität wird." Mystik, p.383. cf. The Mediator, pp.216, 227, 232.

91. CD II/1. p.514.

92. CD I/2. pp.134f.

Thus, in their criticism of Schleiermacher here, both Brunner and Barth emphasize that God is a personal God; the relationship between God and man is a living and personal relationship which really involves the divine act of free love. God cannot be reduced or replaced by a redemptive principle of immanent eternity. He is not to be identified as the universal law, but the Creator-Lord, the Divine Word of revelation in person.

The suffering of Jesus Christ, according to Brunner and Barth, is the omnipotent God condescending in self-humiliation, in order to exalt man. It is the Judge who is judged for those who deserve judgment. As Barth says:

The Holy One stands in the place and under the accusation of a sinner with other sinners. The glorious One is covered with shame. The One who lives for ever has fallen a prey to death. The Creator is subjected to and overcome by the onslaught of that which is not. In short, the Lord is a servant, a slave. 93

And Brunner adds: "God Himself gives Himself in the Son; the suffering of Christ is the act of God, namely, His giving of Himself, by which He establishes fellowship."⁹⁴ Therefore, it is God Himself who suffers for us men; the Holy One takes our place as a sinner, through His own expiatory sacrifice, the forgiveness of sin is credible; through this objective atonement, the justification of a sinner is possible.⁹⁵

Jesus Christ is the true Lord, He is even free to be a sinner among sinners and to suffer Himself for them in order to be true to Himself.⁹⁶ Brunner affirms that the dimension of

93. CD IV/1. p.176.

94. The Divine-Human Encounter, p.105. cf. The Mediator, p.497. God and Man, p.81.

95. The Mediator, p.524.

96. Barth: "Jesus Christ enters human existence as the great joy which shall be to all people. He breaks down this resistance to grace by Himself appearing as grace triumphant, as the royal removal of our sin and guilt by the action of God Himself. Because our sin and guilt are now in the heart of God,

this Atonement is not historical, but super-historical.⁹⁷ It is Christ who has fulfilled all the righteousness of God, because He Himself is the grace of God itself.⁹⁸

Brunner and Barth are most aware that Jesus Christ is the living Lord of the Resurrection. Brunner writes: "We believe in the Resurrection of Jesus because through the whole witness of the Scriptures He attests Himself to us as the Christ and as the living Lord."⁹⁹ Barth explains: "For by the resurrection of Christ we have received our life from God as life in Him, the risen Lord."¹⁰⁰ There is no fantastic or sensuous notion in the Resurrection as Schleiermacher puts it. They admit that indeed there is no objectivity in this event of the Resurrection. Easter is not an "historical event" which can be recorded, nor is it an "occult process" which would be idealistically described by a group of eye-witnesses under strict supervision (Brunner).¹⁰¹ What then is Easter? It is indeed a divine mystery. Barth says that its sign is merely the empty tomb.¹⁰² Barth's thought here turns back to the origin of this mystery and he treats this in the same way as he did the Virgin birth.

they are no longer exclusively ours. Because He bears them, the suffering and the punishment for them are lifted from us, and our own suffering can be only a reminiscence of His." CD II/1. p.374.

97. Brunner: "The Atonement, the expiation of human guilt, the covering of sin through His sacrifice, is not anything which can be conceived from the point of view of history. This event does not belong to the historical plane. It is super-history; it lies in the dimension which no historian knows in so far as he merely an historian." The Mediator, p.504.

98. CD IV/1. p.550; cf. CD II/1. p.150.

99. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.370. cf. The Mediator, p.563.

100. CD II/1. p.437.

101. The Mediator, p.575; cf. pp.578f.

102. Barth: "Again there is a full account of how Jesus suffered and was crucified and died, but there is no real account of His resurrection. It is simply indicated by a reference to the sign of the empty tomb. Then it is quietly presupposed in the form of the attestations of appearances of the Resurrected." CD IV/1. p.334.

Barth insists that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ must be explained together in order to speak of it rightly.¹⁰³ One may see that the following expository statement by Brunner could possibly reflect Schleiermacher's interpretation of the suffering of Jesus Christ:

If all that happens in the Atonement is that men are set free from the false idea that God is a judge, and they thus gain confidence in a God who is kind, then all God has to do is to overcome human error. A human fact is needed simply in order to give men an illustration of the Divine Love. The Death of Jesus has a purely demonstrative meaning. Nothing actually happens, but we are shown that nothing need happened, that God always might have been known as Love.¹⁰⁴

Brunner tends to charge all those who minimize the significance of Christ's death to merely a demonstrative act. It can be inferred from Schleiermacher's doctrine of Christ that he shares the above view. In that case, he has not fully understood the meaning of Christ's death. No wonder, resurrection is regarded by him as fantastic and sensuous. Barth affirms that the resurrection of Jesus Christ certainly involves "a decision of faith, not for the acceptance of a well-attested historical report."¹⁰⁵ Therefore, he has said that "the event of Easter must be understood as the true and original and typical act of revelation, and therefore as an act of God sui generis---a free act of grace, free even in its innermost divine basis, according to the New Testament evidence."¹⁰⁶

103. Barth: "We can and must explain each of these two movements by the other. We do not speak rightly of the death of Jesus Christ unless we have clearly and plainly before us His resurrection, His being as the Resurrected. We also do not speak rightly of His resurrection and His being as the Resurrected if we conceal and efface the fact that this living One was crucified and died for us." Ibid., p.343.

104. The Mediator, p.486.

105. CD IV/1. p.335.

106. Ibid., pp.304f.

Brunner and Barth also discover with penetrating insight that Schleiermacher actually possesses two soteriologies, but their ways of presenting their opinion on this are different, (since Barth's criticism of Schleiermacher differs from that of Brunner to a certain extent). According to Barth, one cannot simply take Schleiermacher as a mystic par excellence. Barth, in fact, emphasize that Schleiermacher has an apologetic purpose in mind, therefore, he prefers to say that Schleiermacher possesses "two motives."¹⁰⁷ Brunner holds that Schleiermacher's system is but one of mysticism, therefore, he prefers to say "two elements."¹⁰⁸ First let us present Brunner's criticism: "We have seen in Schleiermacher's principal theological work of a later time, two heterogeneous elements striving for precedence: his mystical system of philosophy of identity and the Christian faith."¹⁰⁹ Brunner points out that with Schleiermacher in his later years, the second element in his scientific theology is dominant,¹¹⁰ and notes how difficult it was when Schleiermacher tried to combine them in his Glaubenslehre. For Brunner sees that Schleiermacher so delicately elaborates his thought in his finding of the essence (Wesen) of religion as the common ground of all religions and his attempt to amalgamate his philosophy of religion with the Christian faith. Brunner also notes that they simply cannot be combined: "That Schleiermacher needed such an operation of thought, in order to relate his concept of religion to Christian faith, shows clearly enough that the two principles are absolutely uncombinable."¹¹¹ Secondly we see

107. Die Protestantische Theologie, pp.386; 402.

108. Mystik, pp.365; 346.

109. "Wir haben gesehen, dass in Schleiermachers massgebendem theologischem Spät- und Hauptwerk zwei heterogene Elemente um den Vorrang kämpfen: sein identitätsphilosophisch-mystisches System und der christliche Glaube." Ibid., p.365.

110. Loc. cit.

111. "Dass Schleiermacher eine solche Gedankenoperation nötig hatte, um seinen Religionsbegriff mit dem christlichen Glauben in Beziehung zu setzen, zeigt doch wohl deutlich genug die

Barth's view:

One cannot subsequently speak christologically, if Christology has not already been presupposed at the outset, and in its stead other presuppositions have claimed one's attention. On the contrary, one must have the experience of Mt. 6:24, of either hating the one or loving the other, or of cleaving to the one and despising the other. And so Schleiermacher's romantic conception of history...on the one hand, and...[his] christocentric efforts on the other, could only render each other unworthy of credence. 112

Schleiermacher was charged by them for having a system which involved a serious theological disjunction between theology and Christology, for his Christology is seen against the background of his theological thought. Barth writes:

In Schleiermacher's Glaubenslehre, his Christology is the great disturbance, though not a serious or active one, however, a disturbance. What he meant to say, perhaps it could have been said better, clearer, more conclusive, if he had said it in the form of a circle with one centre, instead of an ellipse with two foci. 113

Barth goes on to explain that taking all the basic statements of Church dogmatics as a whole, Christology must either be perceptible and dominant in all these statements, or else it is not Christology.¹¹⁴ Brunner however admits that "thus Schleiermacher, is throughout, even as a 'Christian' theologian, a representative of the immanent conception of religion and of revelation."¹¹⁵ And he points out:

absolute Unvereinbarkeit der beiden Prinzipien." Ibid., p.129. cf. p.359.

112. CD I/2. p.123.

113. "Die Christologie ist die grosse Störung in Schleiermachers Glaubenslehre, vielleicht keine allzu wirksame Störung, aber eine Störung. Was er sagen wollte, wäre vielleicht besser, einleuchtender, geschlossener gesagt worden, wenn er es in form eines Kreises mit einem Mittelpunkt, statt in Form einer Ellipse mit zwei Brennpunkten hätte sagen können." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.385. cf. pp.419f.

114. CD I/2. p.123.

115. "Schleiermacher ist also---auch als 'christlicher' Theologe---durchaus ein Vertreter der immanenten Religions- und Offenbarungsauffassung." Mystik, p.173.

But, in theology, as the years go by, the disturbing element, Jesus Christ as the only Redeemer, has penetrated into his system of continuity. Now the question is: which force of disturbance and breaking-through proceeds from this new element? ...At the first glance the intrusion seems to be a most powerful one, for the whole Glaubenslehre is made up 'christocentrically.' The condition [of man] apart from the redemption in Christ is the theme of the first part; the redemption through Christ is that of the second. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the centre which links and determines all.

We have, however to ask, Brunner continues, whether the content of the teaching corresponds to this external structure. The conclusion is --- No! "The christocentrism here as can be presumed from the analysis of the first part is quite a different one from that of the Christian faith, indeed, it is a misapprehension."¹¹⁶

Thus, Schleiermacher's theology appears christocentric, in spite of the fact that it contains some revolutionary thought opposed to his romantic conception of religion which is due to his being deeply influenced by his contemporaries. Nevertheless, according to the final analysis of Brunner and Barth, this is an unreliable presentation of Christ. For Barth holds that only as we begin with the knowledge of Jesus Christ, can we elaborate a theology in which a distinction between the divine and the human

116. "Aber in der Theologie drängt sich mit den Jahren immer mehr das störende Element, Jesus Christus als der einzige, als der Erlöser, in das System der Stetigkeit hinein. Die Frage ist nun, welche Kraft der Störung und Brechung von diesem Neuen ausgeht...Auf den ersten Blick scheint der Einbruch ein ganz gewaltiger zu sein. Denn die ganze Glaubenslehre ist ja 'christozentrisch' aufgebaut. Der Zustand, abgesehen von der Erlösung in Christus, ist das Thema des ersten, die Erlösung durch Christus das des zweiten Teiles, Jesus Christus also die zusammenhaltende und bestimmende Mitte von allem." Also: "Der Christozentrismus ist hier, wie aus der Analyse des ersten Teils zu vermuten ist, ein ganz anderer als im christlichen Glauben, ja, er ist ein Missverständnis." Mystik, p.346.

is worked out automatically; in this any attempt to replace the order A-B by the order B-A will become naturally impossible. If one wishes to elaborate a wholly christological theology, a theology of revelation and grace one must emphasize the Christological nature of it from the very beginning and all the time; only thus can it be conclusive and truly effective.¹¹⁷ As he says:

Luther and Calvin did not need to aim at a 'christocentric' theology, like Schleiermacher...because their theology was christocentric from the very outset, and without the singular attempt to make or call it so. It did not need to become Christocentric. And how can theology or piety or church life become christocentric, if it is not so at the very outset? The strainings and the unhealthy zeal and historical and systematic devices by which the moderns have tried to become christocentric bear clear and eloquent testimony that they were not christocentric at the outset and therefore cannot be. 118

Therefore, Brunner concludes his criticism:

Schleiermacher's Christology is a desperate struggle with this tough consequence. He conceived Christ only historically, i.e., only as historical force; nevertheless [the effort of] His activity was to be an infinite one. He expounded Him as the product of development, nevertheless He is claimed to be perfect. The whole discussion about Christ is a series of acts of violence, in which Schleiermacher the Christian struggles against [Schleiermacher] the philosopher. Precisely his Christology remained therefore unfruitful in the 19th Century, and that category alone was effective, under which he shelters all: the causality of the historical force, the relativistic historicism. 119

117. CD II/1. p.583.

118. CD I/2. pp.350f.

119. "Schleiermachers Christologie ist ein verzweifelter Ringen mit dieser stahlharten Konsequenz. Er fasst Christus nur historisch auf, d.h. nur als geschichtliche Kraft; trotzdem soll seine Wirkung eine unendliche sein. Er stellt ihn dar als Produkt der Entwicklung, trotzdem soll er vollkommen sein. Die ganze Ausführung über Christus ist eine Kette von Gewaltakten, mit denen der Christ Schleiermacher sich gegen den Denker wehrt. Gerade seine Christologie ist darum im 19. Jahrhundert unfruchtbar

Finally, Barth can only see how human efforts at systematization are in conflict with a true faith in the objective reality of revelation. It is thus seen that Schleiermacher went astray in his effort to reach Christ and so failed in his attempt. But this modernist tradition is still far too active amongst us. Should we try to follow Schleiermacher we would be likely to find ourselves in the fallacy of proving Christ by a system of our own. If we believe that this is perhaps not the conclusion at which Schleiermacher has arrived, we surely involve ourselves in the possibility of being misunderstood from all sides.¹²⁰

geblieben, und wirksam war allein die Kategorie, unter die er alles stellte: die Ursächlichkeit der geschichtlichen Kraft, der relativistische Historismus." *Mystik*, p.206.

120. CD I/2. p.9; cf. *Protestantische Theologie*, p.421.

CHAPTER X

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST VS. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

1. The Church is based on the Word of God, not the essence of human community.

Brunner and Barth set forth the doctrine that the Church is a community which is based on the Word of God, and not on any other bases.¹ Otherwise, as Barth says:

Those who believe in their Church and theology, or in changed men and improved circumstances, are on exactly the same road, the road to uncertainty. This is betrayed by the fact that all of them, incidentally but quite openly, and with the unteachable ferocity of a secret despair of faith, have to take refuge in reason or culture or humanity or race, in order to find some support or other for the Christian religion. But the Christian religion cannot be supported from without, if it can no longer stand alone. If it does stand alone it does not allow itself to be supported from without. Standing alone, it stands upon the fact of God which justifies it, and upon that alone. There is therefore no place for attempts to support it in any other way. Such attempts are a waste of time and energy. ²

On the other hand, it is equally significant to take notice of what Brunner says here: "The Word of God can be found only in the message of the Church. And man can share in truth only by becoming a member of that communion."³ In this connection, as Mackintosh puts it, "Barth's only purpose is to let it be seen that no other criterion can be a substitute for the Word of God. All Churches profess to accept the Word of God as the supreme rule of faith and life. Shall we not, he asks, make an effort

1. The Word and the World, pp.116f. God and Man, p.109.
CD II/1. p.622.
2. CD I/2. p.357.
3. The Word and the World, p.119.

to take this profession seriously?"⁴ To quote Barth's own words: "It is not man as he is going to make something of the Word of God, but the Word of God as it is going to make something of man. Of man---yes, with all the problems of his behaviour and therefore in the whole range of his activities."⁵

Brunner and Barth certainly realize the importance of the human community to individuals as Schleiermacher does. "Humanity means fellowship."⁶ "Man cannot be man 'by himself'; he can only be man in community." Brunner further explains that love can only operate in community, and only this operation of love makes man human. Actually the individual's present existence is enriched and renewed by the human "Thou" which conditions his own existence and is not an accident of it.⁷ Therefore, Barth says, regarding the faith of the Church in its relationship to the significance of community:

It is faith as it lives by and for and in and with this fellowship---the faith of this fellowship and as such the faith of individual Christians. Just as a man would not be a man in and for himself, in isolation from his fellowmen, so a Christian would not be a Christian in and for himself, separated from the fellowship of the saints. With his personal faith he is a member of this body of Christ.⁸

Brunner and Barth's decisive opposition to Schleiermacher here is that the essence of human community is not the basis of the Christian faith on which the Church builds herself. Neither the progress of culture is to be identified with the advancement of the Church nor the religious spirit of the collective life with the true meaning of the Christian fellowship.⁹ Barth says about Schleiermacher that "the Kingdom of God, according to

4. Types of Modern Theology, p.270.

5. CD II/2. p.546.

6. CD IV/1. p.778.

7. Man in Revolt, p.106.

8. CD IV/1. pp.750f. cf. p.778.

9. cf. KD III/4. p.591.

Schleiermacher, is absolutely and unequivocally identical with the progress of culture."¹⁰ Brunner and Barth think that they must point out that the distinctive difference between the opinion they hold and that of Schleiermacher¹¹ is that the Church is a spiritual reality. It represents the work of God in the world in its temporal and historical, earthly and visible form, but this work among men is different from the work of man, though it is in the world and in the community of mankind, yet the true meaning of our Christian life does not lie in its social characteristic itself, but *ἐν Χριστῷ* we trust ourselves in Him. They affirm time and again that the Kingdom of God is not built by men. First says Barth: "In its humanity it is one historically feeble organism with others, but it is the redeemed community justified by the divine sentence and honoured with the knowledge of the justification of the world."¹² "It is not by the obedience, the freedom, or even the love of these men that the Church is built up and lives. It lives wholly in the power of its Lord and His Spirit."¹³ Is it not important to point out here that the Church lives in the Holy Spirit? According to Barth, it is the Holy Spirit which turns what is objective to subjective.¹⁴ Certainly without the Holy Spirit it is unthinkable that our faith could become our experience. No wonder Schleiermacher so emphasizes the significance of the community and unity of the people, or the human spirit---this Christian spirit of the Church. His purpose¹⁵ here is just the same as that

10. "Das Reich Gottes ist nach Schleiermacher mit dem Fortschritt der Kultur schlechterdings und eindeutig identisch." *Die Protestantische Theologie*, p.388.

11. *Die Theologie und die Kirche*, p.188.

12. *CD IV/1*, p.151.

13. *Ibid.*, p.152.

14. von Balthasar, *op. cit.*, p.216.

15. Barth: "Wenn Schleiermacher über Christus und den Christen und ihr gegenseitiges Verhältnis spricht, dann hat er zunächst weder diesen noch jenen, sondern einen diese beiden

of Barth---seeking a way of ^{feeling}transiting what is objective (the reality of revelation) to ^{the}subjective (the experience of our faith). But Schleiermacher is appealing to the essence of human community as the medium which is common in the experience of the individual, i.e., the feeling of a man which connects man to humanity. In other words, Barth appeals to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, for the transition of what is objective to subjective; Schleiermacher to feeling,¹⁶ the essence of man, for the transition of what is subjective to objective---opposite to Barth's. Once again, it is clearly seen that they both stand here in diametrical opposition to each other as far as the content of their theological thought is concerned. Then says Brunner:

We must have a live Church which has an actual word to speak in our muddled condition. But what is the use of a Church which, in order to be up to date, has ceased to be a Church? We are losing the foolishness of the Gospel because we are ashamed of it; and we are substituting for it a modern religious ethical programme which seems to be better fitted to our generation, but which, in fact, is only the wisdom of man, has no moving power, and ends in mere fussiness. 17

umfassenden Begriff vor Augen, nämlich das 'Gesamtleben', die Menschheit, die Geschichte der 'menschlichen Natur.' Es geht in dieser Geschichte um die 'Erlösung' der menschlichen Natur." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.416; cf. C. Welch, The Trinity in Contemporary Theology, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1953), p.5.

16. Barth quotes Schleiermacher's sermons: "Immer geht die erteilte Belehrung darauf hinaus, dass es gelte, diese Gegensätze in ihrer Relativität, in ihrer bloss quantitativen Gegensätzlichkeit zu verstehen, in ihrer Mitte oder über ihnen das 'Gemeinsame Gefühl' oder den 'ausgleichenden gemeinsamen Ton,' das 'Eine, was not tut,' die 'gänzliche Ruhe der Seele in Gott,' das 'Gute' (dessen Merkmal es ist, eines zu sein, während das Böse ein Mannigfaltiges ist), die 'Gemeinschaft,' die 'Einheit,' die 'Gleichheit,' die 'Einfalt des Gemütes Jesu' zu finden, der Ort, wo wir z.B. 'den Trieb unseres eigenen Gemütes und die Eingebung und das Werk des hl. Geistes nicht mehr zu unterscheiden vermögen.' 'Notwendigerweise muss die Wahrheit, die Gott will, muss diejenige Gestaltung dieses Verhältnisses, in der sein Wille erfüllt werden kann, in der Mitte liegen zwischen beiden.'" Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.147.

According to Brunner, the moving power is not the objective spirit of Idealism, which is not based on a personal idea of freedom, but on the universal life of spirit.¹⁸ Faith in the Word of God is different, it is the Spirit of God who speaks to our heart and motivates our decision in faith.¹⁹ Therefore, the objective spirit of Idealism cannot be equated with the Spirit of God.²⁰

Fundamentally Brunner and Barth both take a severely critical view of this rationalistic connection of individuals which is based on the common ground of the people as if the existence of a community is caused by a natural unity.²¹ First let us see the direct way in which Brunner reacts to this:

Man stands in the context of Spirit. But that too is not community but unity; that which is essential in the one human being is essential in the other. This one essential element, therefore, in the last resort, makes the one independent of the other. He can always 'tell himself' what the other could tell him. He has no need of the other. The unity of reason is ultimately a principle of independence, of self-sufficiency; to it, to be dependent upon others and connected with others seems to be something accidental or transient. Thus community is not established. ²²

17. The Theology of Crisis, p.90.

18. "The relation of the individual to the community in the system of objective Idealism...is not the idea of freedom which predominates, but that of the universal life of Spirit, of the 'objective Spirit.'" Man in Revolt, p.298.

19. "This decision is a gift, the highest activity of the self is the gift of God. This echo of the word of Christ in our heart, as the speech of God in us, is Holy Spirit." The Mediator, p.283.

20. "The spirit of man is not to be understood from below but 'from above,' the human spirit has a permanent relation with the Divine Spirit; but it is not the Divine Spirit." Man in Revolt, p.238.

21. As Bultmann puts it, according to Schleiermacher: "Everyone has an 'Empfänglichkeit' (susceptibility) for all others." History and Eschatology, (The Gifford Lecture 1955. Edinburgh: The University Press, 1957), p.111.

22. Man in Revolt, p.437. cf. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.173.

Secondly, let us see the way Barth corrects and denounces this: There are here, varying courses taken by religious enthusiasm, which wishes to submit Christian life to the dictation of what is called the Spirit, or of an "inner light" which is alleged to be divine, or simply to the dictates of the conscience of all individuals. This is based on the erroneous belief that the ordinance governing the Church life is committed into man's hands. When viewed from the standpoint of the basis, the power and the essence of the Christian life, and from that of the true service of God, this form cannot be substantiated or justified.²³ On the other hand, Barth affirms that the fellowship of the Christian life is not a mechanistic one, but a living community: Christ does not assemble individuals or preserve the Christian fellowship as a group of uniformity, but as a particular community in which one can recognize his own individuality and by His power one can confess that "I am a living member of the same, and will be so for ever." Thus, it is a matter of correspondence, reflection and repetition in the relationship between the objective ascription and the subjective appropriation of salvation within this community of problems.²⁴ Tirelessly, Barth analyses the views of modernist thought in conclusion at this point:

To it therefore proclamation is a necessary expression of life for the human community called 'the Church,' an expression in which one man, in the name and for the advancement of a number of other men, drawing from a treasure common to him and to them, gives forth, for the enrichment of this treasure, an interpretation of his own history and present state, as evidence of the reality alive in this group of men. 25

Brunner seems to have agreed with Barth when he says:

This conception of the religious society, like the general

23. The Knowledge of God and the Service of God, pp.126f.

24. CD IV/1. p.149.

25. CD I/1. p.68.

conception of man and the particular conception of the religious man underlying it, is a thoroughly individualistic one. The primary thing is the religious experience of the individual, which leads him to his neighbour, in order that it may find expression for itself. 26

Therefore, as a result, Mackintosh comments on this point that the proclamation of the Church is eccentric, removed from the centre of its proper criterion: "So Modernist Protestantism lost the proper criterion for Church teaching, the standard set over against it. The conscience of the preaching Church was gone, and other criteria derived from immanentist philosophy, science, or the conception of sound civilization, put in its place."²⁷ It is no wonder that Barth so affirms the necessity of obedience to God's command which is the true service of the Church: no religious necessity or human capacity is to take part in the Church service, but only "the necessity of obedience to the gracious will of Jesus Christ present and active in their midst---a necessity which unites them into the Church."²⁸

Seen from these passages quoted above, both Brunner and Barth suggest in one way or another, that Schleiermacher actually absolutizes human beings and human actions. His approach is always man is primary, God is secondary; therefore, no doubt, experience is first, and faith is second.²⁹ But according to Brunner and Barth, the Church has its origin in the revelation of God, for it is constituted by and bound to His Word; it has, in fact, its supernatural dimension hidden from the world and this must not be explained away, as Barth says: "The coming of the Kingdom of God has its truth in itself, not in that which does

26. God and Man, p.108.

27. Types of Modern Theology, p.270.

28. The Knowledge of God and the Service of God, p.XXVII.

29. "The mystical experience of identification lies in the direction of knowledge, but it does not lie in the direction of faith." The Divine-Human Encounter, p.110.

or does not correspond to it on earth."³⁰

2. The object of faith is a mystery of revelation, not the principle of human development.

According to Brunner and Barth, the terrible mistake which Schleiermacher has made here is that the object of faith³¹ is not a mystery of the revelation of God,³² but a religious truth or ethical programme on the psychological or sociological level formed or adopted from a general and normal process of nature and of history which can be phenomenologically perceived or conceived.³³ Thus this natural and ethical interpretation of the Christian faith deviates from the divine revelation and this is intolerable:

To be sure, even in the framework of an ethics which gives man an answer to his own questions many profound and true and serious and fruitful things are said, things which we do well to ponder...But the fact remains that an ethics of this kind spreads a veil over its relationship, and man's relationship, to the revealed command of God, and that this veil has only to be seen to be recognized as intolerable.³⁴

Therefore, in this chapter, the writer is going to discuss further the concept of revelation, from time to time, when it

30. CD IV/1. p.312. cf. "It has to know the third dimension of its existence. Yet it also has to know that it is defenceless against the interpretations to which it is subject on this two-dimensional view." Ibid., p.655.

31. Barth: "When we understand the Christian life in the light of its origin and object, it is simply and without reservation the life of Jesus Christ Himself, so far as men through God's Holy Spirit are united with Him in faith, so far as His life becomes theirs and their life His." The Knowledge of God and the Service of God, p.150. cf. p.155.

32. Brunner: "The Church knows that she lives on the divine revelation, which is Truth...the divine revelation alone is both the ground and the norm, as well as the content of her message." Revelation and Reason, p.3. cf. Barth: "The men gathered into the community and acting as such still stand in need of the grace of God, i.e. of their invisible Lord and His invisible Spirit; that it is He who controls the Church without in any sense being controlled by it." CD IV/1. p.658.

relates to the object of faith of the Church. Brunner reminds us: "We must first treat of the Word of God, of the divine self-revelation, if we wish to understand what the Church is."³⁵ In this line of thought we first consider how McConnachie writes with reference to Modernism:

Revelation was everywhere, if only we had eyes to see it. History was the gradual progressive revelation of God in the human spirit. Divine revelation completed itself, not in a break with the natural and spiritual conceptions of man, but in a continuation of them. It consisted in extending, deepening, and clarifying the religious consciousness.
36

With the advent of modernist knowledge, man's position in nature and the world has been re-defined. He is called to discover the true significance of the world-whole by ascertaining his own religious consciousness.

The basic argument involved is that according to Schleiermacher, the work of redemption is not regarded as done by God Himself alone through His gracious mercy in the historical revelation in Jesus Christ but as a task to perform and an aim to be realized by a group of men united and called the "Church." Thus, the essence of faith, or the Word of God is reduced to or becomes equivalent to the values of the spiritual and moral efforts of man on one hand and the culture of the people or the knowledge of nature is idolized as the object or the counterpart of Christian piety on the other. This is why Brunner has pointed out that:

33. Barth quotes Schleiermacher's sermon that the Church is the perfect revelation of the highest being in the world. Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.177.

34. CD II/2. p.545.

35. God and Man, p.113.

36. Reformation Issues To-day, Reformation Old and New, p.108.

These are all unsuccessful attempts, to add to and combine with the mystico-aesthetical concept of religion the ethical character of the Christian faith. How could it be otherwise? What does not come under the category 'Word,' also can not have the quality of 'seriousness.' What is not heard cannot be obeyed. 37

Barth explains the situation that involved Schleiermacher in the superficial view of the philosophical optimism. It was the idealist philosophy which led Schleiermacher to consider man's existence as a sum of impulses in his immediate self-consciousness, and to discover an original disposition or foundation for the piety which was to be realized in history. Thus, the principle of knowledge in dogmatics simply means the self-interpretation of this definite piety which is historically real. Consequently, the whole presupposition of human existence here is far too naïve, when viewed from the standpoint of its real problems.³⁸ It can be seen that in a slightly different way Brunner agrees with Barth's criticism by saying that it is:

Schleiermacher who has, above all, undertaken an attempt in a great style, logically to establish and justify the compromise of a mysticism of this kind and culture. We have already become acquainted with this synthesis: It is nothing else than the combination of the fundamental conception of the philosophy of identity with an idealistic teleology. 39

37. "Es sind alles missglückte Versuche, mit dem mystisch-ästhetischen Religionsbegriff dem ethischen Charakter des christlichen Glaubens nachträglich zu verbinden. Wie könnte es anders sein? Was nicht unter der Kategorie 'Wort' steht, kann auch nicht die Qualität 'Ernst' haben. Was kein Hören ist, kann auch kein Gehorchen sein." Mystik, p.158.

38. CD I/1. p.39.

39. "Schleiermacher vor allem, der einen Versuch im grossen Stil unternommen hat, den Ausgleich von Mystik dieser Art und Kultur gedanklich zu begründen und zu rechtfertigen. Wir haben diese Synthese bereits kennengelernt: Sie ist nichts anderes als die Verbindung der identitätsphilosophischen Grundidee mit einer idealistischen Teleologie." Mystik, p.392.

Therefore, revelation is thus reduced to merely an impersonal principle, a datum dependent upon human discovery. The existence of the Church is only justified for the function of the community and unity of the people and it is appraised as just one of many other common human activities, as if the Church were advancing in her strides in the sphere and context of their spirit. In this respect, one would venture to ask what eventually is the difference between the advancement of the Church and the development of culture?⁴⁰

In fact, according to Brunner and Barth, in Schleiermacher's presentation of the Church, it is not the Christian Church which he is talking about, but he has actually degraded her to merely a human institution, a religious club,⁴¹ founded, progressing, and built on the common interest or the moral activity of the religious. First Brunner says: "The so-called Church then comes into being through the impulse of the individual to unite himself with others for the further culture of the religious life."⁴² Then Barth: "In this moment he views Christianity together with other educated people, placing it on a level with other 'religious fellowships,' under the point of view under which 'religious fellowship' may be seen from there. Thus he views the Christian Church as 'a fellowship which arises only by the free actions of man and can only continue by these.'"⁴³

40. "Er hat nämlich in seiner Darstellung der verschiedenen Richtungen des christlichen Handelns das Handeln der Kirche und in der Kirche überall an die erste und beherrschende Stelle gesetzt. Auf dem Hintergrund seiner Grundanschauung hat das freilich einen anderen Sinn als den, in welchem wir das in unserem Zusammenhang getan haben. Die Kirche ist nämlich bei Schleiermacher ganz einfach die frundlegende und umfassende Kulturgemeinschaft." KD III/4. p.591.

41. cf. The Philosophy of Religion, p.50; God and Man, pp.107f; CD IV/1. p.655.

42. God and Man, p.108.

43. "Er betrachtet das Christentum in diesem Augenblick mit den anderen Gebildeten zusammen in eine Reihe gestellt mit den anderen 'frommen Gemeinschaften,' unter den Gesichtspunkten, unter denen 'fromme Gemeinschaften' von dort aus zu sehen sind."

It is objectively the universal spirit that draws them together on one hand and it is subjectively their own desires or spiritual impulses that constitutes or pushes forward their progress on the other. Even Barth recognizes this movement which Schleiermacher originally meant to be the moral activities of the Christians only: Schleiermacher especially emphasizes that the locus for these activities is the Church, the community of those who share the Christian outlook.⁴⁴ However, in spite of Schleiermacher's extra effort in affirming it, Barth questions this variant approach:

But to explain what is Christian, do we not have to say things which cannot be said in a framework of a concept of human action generally, however deep? To reach the Christian understanding of the goodness of human conduct, is it not indispensable that there should be a distinctively Christian way of understanding, and therefore a characteristic form of theological ethics as such? Is it not inevitably that the Christian understanding of this matter will be severely curtailed if, through taking things for granted (as was surprisingly the case from Schleiermacher to Schlatter), ways are entered and trodden which in themselves can plainly lead to very different destinations?⁴⁵

Barth can only see that consequently the Church is identified in a natural form as a general ethical fellowship or as the genuine locus for cultural incubation.⁴⁶ Yet we know that Barth, in fact, in this aspect of the criticism, does not go so far as Brunner and he is conscious that Schleiermacher has been busily

Er betrachtet also auch die christliche Kirche als 'eine Gemeinschaft, welche nur durch freie menschliche Handlungen entsteht und nur durch solche fortbestehen kann.'" Die Protestantische Theologie, pp.396f.

44. CD II/2. p.525.

45. Ibid., p.545

46. "Sie weiss also, dass auch ihre Arbeit vom ersten Schritt an nichts anderes sein kann als schlecht und recht Kulturarbeit, Streben nach Gestalt und Verwirklichung, Suchen nach Humanität an einer sehr merkwürdigen, sehr exponierten Stelle im ganzen der menschlichen Gesellschaft, gewiss, aber Kulturarbeit im Rahmen der menschlichen Gesellschaft." Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.386.

engaged in apologetics. Even in this case, from Barth's viewpoint: "The attempt to establish and justify the theologico-ethical inquiry within the framework and on the foundation of the presuppositions and methods of non-theological, of wholly human thinking and language" is eventually not successful,⁴⁷ because what is the natural or general cannot presuppose to dominate what is the theological. Therefore he criticizes Schleiermacher by pointing out that Schleiermacher, as an apologist, maintains the general religious-consciousness (not the specific Christian-consciousness), with its moral content or moral orientation, as a necessary element in the general philosophico-ethical enquiry. In so doing, he attempts "to justify Christian ethics at least indirectly before the forum of philosophical ethics."⁴⁸ Thus, Barth's criticism of Schleiermacher: dogmatics cannot be "Glaubenslehre in the sense of Protestant Modernism (the exposition of the faith of the men united in the Church)---that we have decided by our opposition, which, in view of the Biblical sign, must be made good only factually and not by proof."⁴⁹ In a passage where Barth criticizes the modernist faith, he points out in part how this situation is connected with Schleiermacher's orientation of theological thought:

It began to evolve its own dogmatics, it also expounded from its own side, in the doctrine of 'religion' which is such a feature of the 18th and 19th centuries, its thoroughly characteristic approach to the matter, as it felt it had to understand it. The significance of Schleiermacher consists above all in his having, in his doctrine of Christian piety as the essence of the Church, given this heresy a formal basis which fulfilled the time preceding him, as well as foretold the time succeeding him. He is not the inaugurator, he is the great ripe classic of Modernism, which, if it understands itself, will never let itself be turned away from following him. 50

47. CD II/2. pp.520f.

48. Loc. cit.

49. CD I/1. p.304.

50. Ibid., p.38.

One may ask how can the Church or the Kingdom of God be identified as a fellowship for cultural development, or the Christian faith and the Biblical revelation be diminished to "a positivistic historicism and psychologism?"⁵¹ It is that the modern man does not believe revelation. According to Barth, Camfield writes: "Revelation means a real coming of God to the world. It is not an inner mystic illumination granted to individual souls. It is therefore in that sense historical, and the word of it can only reach us through the witness and confession of a concrete institution and society."⁵² But to the modernist, in a quite different sense of the word: "Revelation means something timeless and general: the universal 'miracle' of the natural order, the universal 'miracle' of the moral law, of humanity, of morality, of thought and ideality; the general sense of the meaning of history as a picture-book to illustrate the text-book of ideas."⁵³ Brunner continues his criticism: Schleiermacher, as an idealist, interprets revelation in terms of illusory optimism of his time by concretizing the universal idea which is believed to be divine. By applying this idea to Nature and human spirit, he secularizes Christian eschatology, for its basis in faith is transferred into the sphere of Idealism. Having lost its decisive character in the idea of judgment, it has to express an idea of becoming as a constant approximation of all to perfection. Indeed, this making concrete of the universal idea can only be seen as a faith detached from its foundation.⁵⁴ Barth also points out that as regards the meaning of the revelation of redemption in the concept of Modernism, both the accomplished atonement and the coming redemption are distorted by an absolutization of human nature and being, therefore,

51. CD II/1. p.73.

52. Revelation and The Holy Spirit, pp.126f.

53. The Mediator, p.38.

54. Ibid., pp.37f.

Modernism degrades to a non-Christian faith:

The former has become a dim historical memory and the latter the equally vague goal of a gradual progress in the direction of this memory; neither of them has any real significance for those who exist in the interval. All that is left to them is faith. But without this twofold reference to the Word as its proper object, and deprived of the power of the 'Glory alone to God on high,' this faith can only be a special mode of human capacity, will and activity, and therefore, in comparison with Christian faith, only a false faith. 55

Here Barth is conscious that the time of the Church is actually the time "Zwischen den Zeiten." And one can see how on the contrary, Brunner unfolds the modernistic view of redemption which is essentially but an awakening of humanity. Here one confronts a basic presupposition of the entire German idealistic philosophy of history: viz., that the entire process of history is the redemptive process of the growth of the Kingdom of God. Just as one's awakening from sleep involves an infinite number of successive stages of becoming more and more awake, so the whole of history is an awakening of mankind---and Christ is that "Moment" in which humanity comes fully awake. Here is redemption: here is the Kingdom of God. Within all this process there seems no real change, since all flows on evenly and uninterruptedly, and the non-redemptive state gradually gives place to the redemptive.⁵⁶ Christian redemption thus would be one of many waves, like an electrical power current, in the collective evolutionary process. Man is in the center of the stage: though an object of an empirical and universal process, he plays a rôle which is also causal. In such a context, redemption frankly becomes little more than an interior line of general cultural development.⁵⁷ Brunner sees

55. CD I/2. p.692.

56. The Mediator, p.87.

57. Mystik, p.289.

that Schleiermacher's conception here has arrived at a view of the world and of history, in which human capacity could finally come to its own goal: the modernist believes that "somehow or another in the end everything must work out well for everybody."⁵⁸ Is this Biblical or doctrinal? Along this line, Barth says:

We are not somehow engaged in trying to persuade ourselves that we are capable of arriving finally at our own goal, of pressing forward to the truth and to God Himself by absolutizing our own being and nature, which is a way of self-deception, because even though we refer to the Bible and dogma, it is all of ourselves and therefore otherwise than by the truth? The peculiar and exceptional thing that we think we have discovered is not that of a most audacious Sic volo sic iubeo! at the conclusion of our movement of thought, which is just empty, i.e. objectless, at the end as it was at the beginning? ⁵⁹

This is a very distorted and naive view of redemption,⁶⁰ and a serious over-evaluation of the potentiality of man because it maintains that all man needs is to develop a higher life from the inner significance of his existence⁶¹ and so to fulfill his being and nature. He need not rely on the redemption in Jesus Christ, but the example of His spiritual experience on one hand and the possibility of human achievement on the other.⁶² As

58. The Mediator, p.489.

59. CD II/1. p.72.

60. McConnachie: "Modern liberal theology, in Barth's view, yielded too easily to the spirit of the Age which led it to take a very exaggerated estimate of the potentialities of human nature. The Jesus of History was preached as a Teacher and Reformer rather than as a Saviour. The urgency of Christianity, as a Gospel of Redemption, was obscured." Reformation Issues To-day, Reformation Old and New, p.107.

61. Barth: "Das 'höhere Leben' bedeutet: die Entwicklung unserer Existenz, und, weil unsere Existenz entscheidend in unserem Existenz- oder Selbstbewusstsein stattfindet, unser Selbstbewusstsein aber entscheidend als frommes Selbstbewusstsein bestimmt ist: die Entwicklung unserer Frömmigkeit." Die Protestantische Theologie, p.418.

62. Barth: "Erlösung ist das höhere Menschheitsleben des Christen, das nicht mit der Schöpfung, nicht in Adam, sondern

Mackintosh puts it, Barth maintains that culture, under God, could be "a parable full of promise," but Schleiermacher is blind in principle to this positive truth because he regards human culture as holy and not pervaded by sin.⁶³ Therefore Barth himself concludes at this point: "We can only say that this is a mistake especially of Neo-Protestantism. For it sets man on a plane which dispenses with the horizons of the accomplished atonement and the coming redemption."⁶⁴ Brunner adds:

Thus the Christian thinking confronts itself here in diametrical opposition to Schleiermacher's system. For what he calls the Heavenly Kingdom, 'That perfection of the Church, whose final end would be the absolute perfection,' and which, it is therefore 'an approximation, something gradually growing!' i.e., something which never attainable in reality. One must reverse this form word for word into its direct opposite in order to arrive at the evangelical [Protestant] knowledge of the Heavenly Kingdom. ⁶⁵

Once again, it has to be pointed out that both Brunner and Barth will not allow the concept of revelation to be dominated by a historical representation, lest the most important task of theology be neglected or simply allowed to degenerate into a philosophy of history. Consequently, Barth, thinking of losing the real theme of theology, regards all anthropological emphases as harmful, because he fails to see how to avoid the danger of handing over theology afresh to some sort of philosophy.⁶⁶

die Schöpfung vollendend und krönend, eben erst in Christus seinen Anfang nahm und das nun als Impuls, als Bewegung als das Leben des Geistes Christi in seiner Gemeinde auch den Christen erreicht." Ibid., p.416.

63. Types of Modern Theology, p.271.

64. CD I/2. p.692.

65. "So stehen sich auch hier christliches Denken und Schleiermachers System in schroffstem Gegensatz gegenüber. Er nennt das Himmelreich 'diejenige Vollkommenheit der Kirche, deren letztes Ende die absolute Vollkommenheit sein würde,' und die also 'eine Approximation und also etwas allmählich wachsendes,' d.h. in Wirklichkeit nie Erreichbares ist. Man muss diese Formel Wort für Wort ins Gegenteil umkehren, um die evangelische Erkenntnis des Himmelreichs daraus zu machen." Mystik, pp.299f.

66. CD I/1. p.145.

3. The Saving-history cannot be identified with evolution of history.

In this section Brunner begins: "We must not confuse this standpoint of 'saving-history' with that of the 'evolution of history.' Saving-history is God's institution of revelation, which takes human development into account, but is not itself the product of development."⁶⁷ He has also pointed out that "one of the most fatal errors in the history of theology is the identification of the Biblical idea of the kingdom with the rationalistic evolution of the optimistic theory of progress of the 18th century. It was Kant who started this unfortunate business; it was Schleiermacher, and after him Ritschl, who continued it."⁶⁸ Brunner also calls our attention further to the fact that the victory of the Kingdom of God can in no way be identified with the rationalistic evolution:

One cannot speak of an evolution of the Kingdom of God... For evolution is continuous: this movement is not. Evolution is growth from within, but this growth is from without. Evolution is always immanent; the Kingdom, from the beginning to the end, is transcendent, for faith rests alone on that which God does. Evolution is direct; the growth of one thing means the lessing of some other. 69

Thus, Brunner criticizes Schleiermacher for his relativistic theory of optimistic evolution which not only results in a religion without a Mediator, but even results in a doing away with the function of the Church. The situation is that as one side grows, the other side is weakened, as if it were a condition of relativized boundaries. And Brunner affirms that the growth of the Kingdom of God is different or remains hidden. Although this kingdom, like the true Church itself, is an historical

67. Revelation and Reason, p.291.

68. The Theology of Crisis, p.111.

69. Ibid., p.110.

art-

reality, no statistics is available for knowing its progress, for it declines the emphasis on decision. Therefore, it seems that evil and good both increase at the same time, just as "the tares grow with the wheat until the harvest. Then only will the two be separated."⁷⁰ Brunner takes this parable seriously in his opposition to Schleiermacher's clear-cut view of history:

The understanding of history in the New Testament which is essentially the same as that of the Reformers is denoted in the briefest form by the parable of tares among the wheat. It is thereby signified that it is ambiguous, bi-linear, broken, dialectical, and behind it stands the most dreadful repulse of all singular-linear optimism of progress, the threatening word: judgment! with its: 'to the right, to the left,' its 'enter thou into the joy of thy Lord and 'cast him into outer darkness.' In other words: there is no possibility for us to define historical things unequivocally, and to let the whole of history come to an end in one line alone.

71

Brunner further explains that the conception of logical development in history is not fruitful to the reality of historical movement:

The real movement of history, which passes through act and decision, is presented to the rational interpretation of history as a logical movement, in which, properly speaking, nothing is done, because everything was already there from the outset. It does not matter whether it was already 'there' in a teleological or in a causal sense. In both cases something which was already there is inevitably unrolled like a map which has been rolled up, or a film which

70. The Mediator, p.616. cf. The Theology of Crisis, p.111.

71. "Das Geschichtsverständnis des Neuen Testaments, das in allem wesentlichen das der Reformatoren ist, ist am kürzesten zu bezeichnen durch das Gleichnis vom Unkraut unter dem Weizen. Damit ist angedeutet: Es ist zweideutig, zweilinig, gebrochen, dialektisch, und hinter ihm steht, als furchtbarste Abwehr alles einlinigen Fortschrittsoptimismus, das drohende Wort: Gericht! mit seinem: 'Zur Rechten, zur Linken,' seinem 'Gehe ein zu deines Herrn Freude' und 'Werfet ihn hinaus in die äusserste Finsternis.' Mit anderen Worten: Es gibt für uns Menschen keine Möglichkeit, geschichtliche Dinge eindeutig zu bestimmen, geschweige, die ganze Geschichte in eine Linie auslaufen zu lassen." Mystik, p.296.

was already complete. Here there is no room for the element of real history, for the solution of contradictions in act and decision. 72

Thus, the growth of the Kingdom of God is understood as a paradoxical development. It remains hidden from relativistic analysis. Therefore, it cannot be determined or identified in terms of optimism or evolution. Barth also strongly criticizes this cultural-Protestantism (Kulturprotestantismus), saying: "And how utterly in the end, when the great moment came in which at least to some extent a 'theology of revelation' should have distinguished itself from the theology of civilization as based upon the relativity of everything human, did it go hand-in-hand with it, in ethos and in ethics!"⁷³

Certainly the Church is a group of united men and it is a historical phenomenon,⁷⁴ but there is something more than simply a religious communion, something hidden which cannot be understood purely in terms of our conceptual world. Here Barth analyses the two sides of its nature: i.e., differentiate Christian faith from Christian religion:

Christian faith is not in any sense a fact and phenomenon which is generally known and which can as such be explained to everybody. The Christian religion is a fact and phenomenon of this kind. As such it can be considered and estimated historically, psychologically, sociologically and perhaps even philosophically. But the Christian religion is not as such Christian faith. Christian faith is something concealed in the Christian religion (like the true Church in its visibility). As such it can only be believed. It can be known and confessed only in faith. 75

In this connection, another point has to be discussed. Indeed,

72. Man in Revolt, p.438.

73. CD I/1. p.290.

74. CD IV/1. p.654; The Mediator, p.559; The Divine Imperative, p.523.

75. CD IV/1. p.741.

it is impossible to have the Invisible Church without its being manifested in the Visible Church.⁷⁶ But a true Christian faith is anchored in His Word, the revelation of God. Its security does not rely on the social character of any external forms of human equivalence on one hand and the existing natural order of the world can in no way identify the divine purpose for man on the other. Indeed the work of God is manifested in the Church as an earthly institution in order to reach man, yet its divine origin as "the Kingdom" is concealed in the earthly, historical veil; metaphorically speaking, the Church is "the Kingdom" in "the form of a servant."⁷⁷ That is why the message or the nature of the Gospel is paradoxical: one must lose his life in order to save it. It is foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling block to the Jews.⁷⁸ It is because the work of God originally is miraculous that the Church makes the attempt to interpret the incomprehensible to man. The Church must always be conscious of this and not seek a complete view of reality.⁷⁹

Brunner and Barth both emphasize time and again a new insight into the fact that this Church is "called out by Christ," and is the body of Christ.⁸⁰ The Church can neither be understood in the happy and comprehensive terms of universal

76. Brunner: "There is no Church, in any sense of the word, apart from human action." The Divine Imperative, p.527; Barth: "In this concrete form it lives as His body in this world. It is spiritual by nature, but it exists in terms of this world." CD IV/1. p.710. For further discussion, see The Divine Imperative, p.525; CD IV/1. p.669.

77. The Divine Imperative, p.526. cf. p.524.

78. Brunner: "The Kingdom of God is here; yes, in this paradoxical form. One can truly share it, but only in a paradoxical way---through faith, not through sight. Such is also the character of the kingdom of God in the community of the saints, the Church." The Theology of Crisis, pp.108f.

79. McConnachie, Reformation Issues To-day, Reformation Old and New, p.108.

80. The Divine Imperative, p.177; The Theology of Crisis, p.83; The Divine-Human Encounter, p.115; CD II/1. pp.160, 485; CD IV/1. p.675.

humanity⁸¹ nor in the theory of creative evolution.⁸² The provisional character of its existence "points beyond itself to the fellowship of all men."⁸³ The Kingdom of God which exists in history as the Church is the fellowship of those who have made the decision of faith. Christians must not believe the progress of the world, but the victory of this divine Kingdom (Brunner).⁸⁴ Therefore, the Church must look beyond its temporal existence, otherwise it will only find itself as merely the religious community (Barth).⁸⁵ This clearly suggests that another dimension of thought must be both introduced and safeguarded. Otherwise as Brunner warned: "If the Church has nothing to proclaim but social ethics applied to public life, she is drawing her own death-certificate. The Gospel is not an imperative; it is an indicative. The imperative which we have in our own conscience does not give the strength to do what we ought to do." Indeed, the Gospel does not demand, but give. It reveals the secret of God's loving purpose, giving to the world something new. This divine message of reconciliation lays the foundation for community.⁸⁶ According to Brunner and Barth, the fundamental

81. "Es komme für einen Jeden darauf an, zu entdenken, welches Gebiet der Menschheit ihm angehöre, wo der gemeinsame Grund seiner Ausdehnung und seiner Schranken zu suchen ist, den ganzen Inhalt seines eigenen Wesens zu ermessen, auf allen Punkten seine Grenzen zu entdecken und 'prophetisch' zu erraten, was er noch sei und werden könnte -- schliesslich: sich in tausend fremde Bildungen hineinzudenken, um desto deutlicher die eigene zu erkennen und ins Werk zu setzen. -- Das sind Weisungen, die in angemessener Übersetzung und Interpretation ihres Wortlautes wohl auch als Weisungen christlicher Ethik verstanden werden könnten." KD III/4. p.440.

82. "Noch am Anfang des Jahrhunderts hatten die Idealisten, hatte z.B. Schleiermacher als Ethiker den Sieg des Geistes über Natur und Materie in gewaltigem Anbruch befindliche gesehen. Das Bild der wirklichen Dinge begann sich doch den Völkern, und zwar den führenden wie den geführten Schichten aller Kulturvölker mit Ausnahme der weiter träumenden Philosophen, Poeten und Leider auch Theologen, rasch ganz anders darzustellen." KD III/2. pp.463f.

83. Weber, op. cit., p.98.

84. The Mediator, p.615.

85. CD II/1. p.161.

86. The Word and the World, p.125.

concern is that there is no historical sequence of relativistic magnitude in the evolutionary sense of the term which can equate or determine the genuine significance of the existence of the Church, without making it subject to human judgment. Barth declares:

The being of the community in its temporal character is hidden under considerable and very powerful appearances to the contrary. There is no direct identity between what the community is and any confession, theology or cultus; any party, trend, group or movement in the being of the community as it may be generally perceived. 87

Thus, the Church must not be tempted to identify herself with the religious movement of universal necessity. If Schleiermacher's great Glaubenslehre is to be regarded as a sort of "fall" of Christianity, or as its "canonization," one notices some evidence of this in the context of Schleiermacher's general philosophy of history, in which---on the basis of ethics---we meet a definition of "a pious society" which consists largely of a "monotheistic form of faith related to the teleological direction of piety," a form yet made unique by its connection at every point to the redemption executed by Jesus of Nazareth. "In this definition," Barth states, "everything has been more or less correctly perceived. The only thing is that the third dimension, in which the Church is what it is, is completely absent."⁸⁸

Brunner further remarks that an interest in history occupies an important place in the romanticists' thinking when he writes: "But the romantic idea shows itself even until to-day as the stronger [impulse]. For out of it arises the historical interest and the enthusiasm for history. The historicism of to-day is the romantic conception of history tempered by the

87. CD IV/1. p.657.

88. Ibid., p.656.

ideas of development of natural science."⁸⁹ Because they seek for truth within history, but according to Brunner, truth includes history, not vice versa.⁹⁰ Is it not true, that the romantic conception of the modernist has just reversed the proper position. Here "truth" Brunner identifies as "God."⁹¹ One may ask actually what would be the basic difference between Brunner's concept and that of the Modernist besides the reversal of order and his affirming that there is not a relation of God and the world as a vis - à - vis?

Barth would affirm the absolute freedom of God rather than simply reverse the order of the modernist: God is even free to be constant because He has all power over time. Since He is God in His eternity, the One who endures, we may simply trust Him as He is.⁹² In a clearer and slightly different way, Barth presents his conception of God's work in history:

So far from contradicting Himself God confirms Himself as the Creator of the world by having a special history with it in His work of reconciliation and revelation. It is, of course, clear that God introduces something really new, distinct from the work of creation as such, in this history, His history with Israel and the Church. ⁹³

In order to develop further this view, it is significant to take notice that in another passage God is emphasized as in Jesus

89. "Aber die romantische Idee erwies sich bis heute als die stärkere. Stammt doch auch aus ihr das geschichtliche Interesse und die Begeisterung für die Geschichte. Der Historismus der Gegenwart ist die durch den naturwissenschaftlichen Entwicklungsgedanken temperierte romantische Geschichtsauffassung." *Mystik*, p.195.

90. *Ibid.*, p.209.

91. *Loc. cit.* cf. also his explanation: "We must recognize the God who is active in history, who makes Himself known, not in a doctrine, but in historical action; the God who 'makes' history with His people, the God who strides forward, the One who 'comes.'" *Revelation and Reason*, p.196.

92. *CD II/1*, p.609.

93. *Ibid.*, p.503.

Christ rather than as truth in the way that Brunner did here. Barth writes: "But only as the Lord of the Church will it be possible for Jesus to be manifest to us; as the Lord of the world He is hidden from us. We cannot get a knowledge of His government from the world's events, though we are certainly concerned there with none other power than His."⁹⁴ It may be seen here that Barth has set aside natural theology.⁹⁵ According to him, it is not only true that God and general history are not a one-way traffic, but also that there is no tracing from the world how God is to be found in it except in the special history,⁹⁶ equivalent to what has been mentioned above as Brunner's "Saving-history." At this point Brunner essentially agrees with Barth and says that God is an absolutely free Lord over His creatures:

This does not mean, as Schleiermacher argues, that the divine providence is identical with natural causality. The fact that this is not so becomes clear to us above all in the fact that the Christian idea of Providence includes the divine power to work miracles, the divine sovereignty over nature. The personal idea of God which is real, and not imagined, implies the divine freedom over all causality, over all necessity. Here, there is, no room for the idea of Fate or Destiny *ἐξ αναγκῆς*⁹⁷

Thus, Schleiermacher cannot escape from the criticism of

94. Credo, p.191.

95. Torrance: "He (Barth) warns us, for example, that we have no right to deprive the natural man of his natural theology, for it is his only consolation in life and death, and, therefore, our rejection of natural theology must not be any kind of metaphysical denial; rather must it be grounded only upon the actual event of grace as setting it completely aside for faith. There is no room whatever for it in a Christian theology, precisely because a Christian theology has to do with a new creation." The Word of God and The Nature of Man, Reformation Old and New, p.135.

96. Prenter, Glauben und Erkennen bei Karl Barth, Kerygma und Dogma, 2 Jahrgang, Heft 3, Juli 1956, p.183.

97. The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, Dogmatics, II. p.156.

Brunner and Barth for his approach to eternal truth by way of the empirical and the historical, Brunner writes:

The various people with their cultures and religions, indeed even the great religions of the world themselves, with Christianity at their head, are simply transitional stages in the process by which the human spirit becomes aware of eternal truth. Similarly Schleiermacher the philosopher, regards the immanent, historical world process as the universal transformation of nature into spirit, which attains its goal in religion---subjectively, as the consciousness of the unity of all contradictions, and objectively, in the final accomplishment of civilization, whereas Schleiermacher the theologian, closely united with the philosopher in personal union, tries to equate this religion of timeless mysticism with the Christian faith. (see Mystik und das Wort) The grandeur of these theories of philosophy of history, however, must not blind us to the fact that in them all history is merely the setting for religion; it is never the object of faith. Here this complete emancipation of Christianity from the mystical element, by means of the interpretation of revelation in symbols of the eternal, has only one unfortunate result: that nothing of Christianity is left. 98

Once again, Brunner prefers to return to his criticism of mysticism where he points out that the real mistake is that mystics always vaguely imagine that they can exclusively possess or pragmatically experience religion.⁹⁹ Therefore, at bottom, in this

98. Revelation and Reason, p.398.

99. Brunner clearly states: "The Christian faith, faith in the God revealed by Jesus Christ, is not 'one of the religions of the world.'" And he adds: "The Christian faith alone lives by the Word of God, by the revelation in which God imparts Himself." He also clears this up: "A religious and geographical survey of the world would of course include 'Christinaity' under the general concept of religion." Revelation and Reason, p.258. cf. CD IV/1. p.671. Barth: "The Christian community and Christian faith belong to the substance of the one confession which has its centre in Jesus Christ. In the Christian Church we have to do with man, his history, existence and activity in this peculiar but provisional form." CD IV/1. p.644; cf. p.652.

way, in their immanent, mystical and religious interpretation of Christianity, they lose truth and grace, and therefore, their faith and hope in the Christian sense of the word.¹⁰⁰ Brunner thus criticizes:

This is the real mystical experience. It is experience in time; in this historical existence, the ultimate, the perfect is reached. Indeed, though here too, in the realm of 'Christian' mystic, a certain vacillation enters. One has the ultimate as experience, not as hope, as possession, not as faith, as fulfillment of the longing for immediacy, as vision of God; and yet a slight reminder restrains one to call this ultimate really unlimited the ultimate. ¹⁰¹

Barth criticizes Schleiermacher in this respect by emphasizing that Jesus Christ must be dominant or prominent in the elaboration of a theology. He admits, however, this situation: when we speak of the community and faith, we speak of human experience and action.¹⁰² One cannot simply venture the experience with the spirit alone,¹⁰³ as if the truth or grace of God is at the disposal of man if he so desires to own it. He cannot possess

100. Brunner: "The Church proclaims as absolute truth that which can be neither proved by the intellect nor verified by experience." Revelation and Reason, p.6; also: "All that the Christian community is, and all that she has, is never her own exclusive possession: all that she is and has she has received." Ibid., p.3.

101. "Das ist das eigentliche mystische Erlebnis. Erlebnis ist es; in der Zeit, in dieser geschichtlichen Existenz wird das Letzte, das Vollkommene erreicht. Zwar tritt auch hier wieder, im Gebiet der 'christlichen' Mystik ein gewisses Schwanken ein. Man hat das Höchste als Erlebnis, nicht als Hoffnung, als Besitz, nicht als Glaube, als Erfüllung der Sehnsucht nach Unmittelbarkeit, als Gottschau; und doch hält eine leise Erinnerung zurück, dieses Letzte auch wirklich uneingeschränkt das Letzte zu nennen." Mystik, pp.372f.

102. CD IV/1. p.645.

103. Barth: "Man darf aber nicht übersehen, dass es auch in ganz anderer Weise aufgenommen und durchgeführt werden könnte, als Schleiermacher selbst es getan hat, nämlich als eine Theologie

it without realizing that truth and grace can only be sought or found in Jesus Christ. Therefore, Barth truly understands Schleiermacher with reference to his classical attempt to affirm a specific Christian content in the general religious experience:

In its true and strict historical sense it can be understood only as a summons to rebellion against the grace of God. This rebellion does not become less heinous if later, perhaps, it proceeds to make the grace of God an object of human self-reflection, self-understanding and self-responsibility, to make it a special content of human self-consciousness, and therefore to give to this self-consciousness, among other things, a religious or even a supposedly Christian content, as in the classical attempt of Schleiermacher, the Christian apologist among the Idealists. What begins with the human self cannot end with the knowledge of God and of His command. Nor can it end with the knowledge of the real man in his real situation. 104

Thus, Barth criticizes Schleiermacher for the same thing in a different way, in a way which is more positive and christocentric in approach. According to Barth, when Christian theologians elaborate their theology, they must neither venture with the first article alone, sketching a theology of God the Creator abstractly and directly, nor simply with the third article, sketching a theology of experience psychologically and ethically. If they want to keep themselves on the right track, they must centralize their thought on the second article, the declaration of what Jesus Christ our Lord means for us men.¹⁰⁵ It is seen here that

der subjektiven Wirklichkeit und Möglichkeit der Offenbarung, die deren objektive Wirklichkeit und Möglichkeit nicht aus-, sondern einschliessen würde: als eine solche Theologie vom Menschen her, die sich selbst als eine Theologie des Heiligen Geistes verstünde." KD III/3. pp.370f. cf. As Barth understands Schleiermacher from his sermon: "Alles, was wir tun vermöge der geistigen Kraft, mit welcher Gott das menschliche Geschlecht ausgerüstet hat, wird ein Werk Gottes, von dem die Gabe kommt." Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.183.

104. CD II/2. p.541.

105. Dogmatics in Outline, transl. by G.T. Thomson, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1955), pp.65f. cf. Die Protestantische Theologie, p.422.

Barth orients our thought to Jesus Christ, in order to return to what is primarily important for Christian faith. However, according to Brunner, the fact is that the modernist believes that his religious experience is much more important than what is to be regarded as historical: "It is religious experience which the modern man seeks. He conceives the Christian faith as an embarrassment and as a burden of the past."¹⁰⁶

Finally, in regard to the future redemption, in the first instance, it is significant to trace some steps backward. According to Brunner's critique: Schleiermacher's basic concept of religion is crude and self-sufficient; the latter holds that one's religious feeling does not need to reach out and grasp the revelation of God,¹⁰⁷ and he does not hold Him to be the true Mediator. Barth has criticized Schleiermacher's anthropological approach to religion, which holds that truth or reality, problem and answer, are all but products of the human heart. In other words, all is in man.¹⁰⁸ Brunner points out: "Indeed it has nothing 'before' or 'over' itself, it shoots no arrow of desire to the other shore, as it is pure present-in-itself. It rests; it enjoys itself; it is blissful; 'it is happy in itself.' It is like a caterpillar on a leaf which does not look beyond the leaf."¹⁰⁹ But let us return to Barth, once again, who states

106. "Dieses religiöse Erleben aber ist es, das der moderne Mensch sucht. Den christlichen Glauben empfindet er als Verlegenheit und als Last der Vergangenheit." *Mystik*, pp.3f.

107. *Ibid.*, pp.174f.

108. *Die Theologie und die Kirche*, p.207; cf. Brunner: "He puts the question, but it is he too who answers it to himself." *God and Man*, p.47.

109. "Er hat ja nichts 'vor' sich oder 'über' sich, es schießt keine Pfeile der Sehnsucht ans andere Ufer, da es reines Beisichsein ist. Es ruht, es genießt sich selbst, es ist selig, 'in sich selbst vergnügt.' Wie die Raupe auf einem Blatt nicht über das Blatt hinaussieht." *Mystik*, p.166. cf. pp.117f., p.179.

more positively that the proclamation of the Church is involved and since it has received the promise that this phenomenon is identical with the Word of God:

It is this promise which will not allow us to remain content with a system of doctrine like that of Schleiermacher. For there the phenomenon of Church proclamation is finally understood from and in itself, that is, from and in its connexion with very different types of human proclamation, and its relation to man as historical being in general. And it is always criticized and rectified from the standpoint of its own immanent laws. 110

Schleiermacher holds that there is no coming redemption for him; there is an "eschatological hole (das eschatologische Loch)." 111 He is only conscious of the fact that it is this life that matters. He sees that the character of the Christian religion has only to do with this life. As Brunner understands it:

In this religion one possesses God, one does not hope for Him; one experiences redemption, one does not believe in a redemption which would be more than the religious consciousness. One is satisfied with the 'ease' and 'virtuosity,' with which the pious feeling combines with the other functions of consciousness; but one does not long for new creation, does not look out toward the new world. 112

Brunner concludes his discussion by pointing out that Christianity possesses a view which is even more optimistic than that of Idealism, for there is a future complete redemption. Christianity does not only know of a progress within history, but also of the eternal Kingdom, of the resurrection from the dead and of the fulfilled redemption. 113 Indeed, man in his visible

110. CD I/2. p.799.

111. Mystik, p.256.

112. "In dieser Religion besitzt man Gott, man hofft nicht auf ihn; man erlebt Erlösung, aber man glaubt nicht an eine Erlösung, die mehr wäre als das religiöse Bewusstsein selbst. Man ist zufrieden mit der 'Leichtigkeit' und 'Virtuosität,' mit der sich das fromme Gefühl mit anderen Funktionen des Bewusstseins verbindet, aber man sehnt sich nicht nach der neuen Schöpfung, schaut nicht aus nach der neuen Welt." Ibid., p.186.

appearance comes and goes just as civilizations and cultures its temporal characteristics, but he is destined by the Creator for eternity. Since the Gospel is the revelation of eternal life, man as a person is not meant to pass away.¹¹⁴

In this respect, in Barth's thought, one surely does not become sensationally interested in vague ideals of immortality,¹¹⁵ in an uncertain promise which might be created for him by man or by circumstances.¹¹⁶ Rather one ought to recognize the limitation of this life and believe in the work of reconciliation accomplished by God as "fundamentally a new work as compared with the work of creation because it consists in the opening up of this depth or perspective for creation, the vision of the resurrection of the body, eternal life and the new heaven and the new earth."¹¹⁷ Torrance comments on this: "It is the risen humanity of Christ which forms the very centre of the Christian's hope, for it is the ground and basis of his own renewal and indeed of the renewal of all creation."¹¹⁸ According to Barth, one must look beyond for help and trust and hope for the coming redemption. Thus, he has correctly observed that:

113. The Mediator, p.614; cf. "They [Christians] are not the victory over the world, for the best Christians are sinners and become ill and die; but they are signs and anticipations of a victory won in the realm of the invisible world, a victory that some time will become, but is not now, visible." The Theology of Crisis, p.110.

114. Christianity and Civilization, II. p.140.

115. "The fact that He is our coming Redeemer, must above all be perceived and recognized with gratitude as something special. This will not conflict with the gratitude which we owe Him already as our Creator. It will be the proper gratitude towards the One who has revealed Himself as our Creator and also as our Redeemer because He is in fact both, and not the first without being the second." CD II/1. p.510.

116. CD IV/1. p.595.

117. CD II/1. p.510.

118. Karl Barth, The Expository Times, LXVI. Oct.1954-Sept. 1955. p.209.

The error in this outlook is twofold. It consists in the optical illusion that the plane on which the believer exists is unbounded, and without horizons; he does not notice the direct proximity of the hills before and behind him, whence comes his help. And it is also the acoustic error that the word 'faith' still means Christian faith even though the trust and hope and daring of the human heart which it signifies has lost its direction to these hills, instead of being a promising trust and hope and daring in this direction. 119

Thus, revelation is true only because we believe in this coming redemption and faith is real only because we live in this trusting hope. Barth says: "Christian hope is a present being in and with and by the promise of the future, a being which is seized by the promise of God and called. If a man does not seize this hope, apprehend it, conform himself to it here and now as a man who belongs to the future, he is not one who has Christian hope."¹²⁰ Certainly, Barth thinks of the Christian hope or promise as having to do with the present; it has to be apprehended in the temporality of this life by us¹²¹ in our trusting in it. His attack on Schleiermacher culminates at this point: "We believe that what we found in the teaching of Schleiermacher was the theological kernel of a Christianity-of-the-present compatible neither with the Bible nor the real world. We were convinced that we must oppose this."¹²²

In conclusion, we note that Brunner and Barth oppose Schleiermacher's relativistic view of historicism and affirm that the history of the world is different from "Saving-history." This dimension of thought is totally absent from Schleiermacher's theological thought.¹²³ It is not that reconciliation is a human

119. CD I/2. p.692. cf. *Mystik*, p.337.

120. CD IV/1. p.121.

121. For detailed discussion, see CD II/1. pp.624f; CD IV/1. pp.595, 600, 602, 604f.

122. CD II/1. p.634.

123. Löffler: "Eine Heilsgeschichte als Geschichte des

achievement of uniformity; the coming redemption is not the sum total of human development. According to Brunner and Barth, the work of God is not to be identified as the cultural progress of man.

Schleiermacher's incorrect or defective view of revelation, which is but a general one and which indeed may possess intelligible worth for knowledge, becomes opaque when it comes to faith.

Handelns Gottes, die unabhängig vor der Entwicklungsgeschichte des Menschen sich vollzieht, ist ihm unbekannt." op. cit., p.307.

POSTSCRIPT

With regard to prayer in the Christian life Barth holds that "the hearing of believing prayer is not to be reduced to the general truth that we are to live before God in humility as His servants and in gratitude as His children. We should recognize that in the realization of this general truth we participate in the special."¹²⁴

Since the Church is commissioned to witness to the message of the Gospel before the world, it must also be taken into consideration that "the individual human being cannot be united with God apart from an organic connection with the fellowship of the Church and its tradition."¹²⁵ Brunner and Barth agree with Schleiermacher that "mission work does not arise from any arrogance in the Christian Church; mission is its cause and its life," and Brunner goes on to explain that "the Church exists by mission, just as a fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission, there is no Church; and where there is neither Church nor mission, there is no faith."¹²⁶ Barth agrees with him: The community "lives by the freedom in which when it hears this word it is pledged in advance of the world but also to the world. It lives by the fact that Jesus lives, and therefore for the task of telling this good news to all people."¹²⁷

In the knowledge of faith Barth agrees with Schleiermacher that the Church is "stronger than the world and overcomes it,"¹²⁸

124. CD II/1. p.512----This passage perhaps is the best for correcting Schleiermacher's doctrine of prayer. As Barth understands him from his sermons: cf. Die Theologie und die Kirche, p.182.

125. Revelation and Reason, p.147.

126. The Word and the World, p.108. cf. Revelation and Reason, pp.138, 148.

127. CD IV/1. p.347. cf. CD II/1. p.172.

128. CD IV/1. p.727.

and he also admits that "there is no perfection" in the Church but only a "deep and radical imperfection of the cry, 'Abba, Father.'"¹²⁹ Brunner agrees with Barth: "The Church and perfection are mutually exclusive ideas; the Church is the community of those who are still sinners; therefore, the Church is always an imperfect community, permeated with sin."¹³⁰

In regard to the unity of the Church in the necessary form of multiplicity, Barth holds that "the one Church exists in its totality in each of the individual communities,"¹³¹ and he continues to assert that this form must not be reduced to a mere principle as if multiplicity is necessary apart from geographical separation: "We must not try to explain and justify it as a development of the riches of the grace given to man in Jesus Christ, a development which derives from the Holy Spirit and which is therefore normal and acceptable." Furthermore: "We must not deduce this plurality of Churches from some principle, as though the contradictions were necessities of the una ecclesia, as though this Church had to be divided."¹³² Brunner fundamentally holds the same and he concludes at this point with a pitiable view:

It would take a very romantic mind to see in this fact the delightful variety of a spontaneous manifestation of life. Certainly uniformity is not a sign of life, not even of genuine spiritual life. But here we are concerned not with the variety of mere forms but with fundamental antitheses in the understanding of the Gospel, and therefore not with a variety of organs, each of which has its own function, but with a terrible and also inevitable fight against each other. 133

129. Ibid., p.738.

130. The Divine Imperative, pp.526f.

131. CD IV/1. p.673.

132. Ibid., p.677. cf. p.671.

133. The Divine Imperative, p.543.

EPILOGUE

A MANY-SIDED ESTIMATE OF THEIR CRITIQUE AND THE THEOLOGY OF SCHLEIERMACHER

1. The decisive difference in their theological positions involves the distinctive diversities in their points of departure, together with summaries of their different approaches.

To understand Schleiermacher's theology, it is most important to know the idealistic and romantic current of his age in which he is involved. It is Schleiermacher who reconciles the multifarious theories of his eventful days. Falckenberg writes: "Schleiermacher is an eclectic, but one who, amid the fusion of the most diverse ideas, knows how to make his own individuality felt."¹ Thus, it is seen that Schleiermacher is fundamentally a systematizer who knows how to choose a unique position which is the most valid or defensible emphasis of his time. Indeed, we have noted that Schleiermacher himself is the centre of his peripheral contemplation of the universe. On one hand, religious experience to him is his all in all: it embraces subject and object; it consists of problem and answer. On the other, he believes that religious content rests upon a given ground; it mediates God and feeling; it connects man and humanity. Schleiermacher's engrossing method of "All-One" eventually leaves no difference between the knowledge of the transcendental and that of the formal; or that of the speculative and that of the empirical. According to him, they should all be identified

1. Falckenberg, History of Modern Philosophy, transl. by A.C. Armstrong, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1895), p.476.

because they are all seen as essentially synthetic. With this imaginary and speculative theory, Schleiermacher elaborated his doctrine of the Great Whole which defines man in humanity, and humanity in nature as the world-whole of the finite which is in the Infinite, for he contemplates reality within Reality, a whole within a Whole.

In furthering this idea of the Great Whole, it is affirmed that all hindrances which occurred in life within the realm of religious experience are mere forces of stimulation to a higher life. They happened to be the proper process in human development. In this spiritual struggle, man is destined to win a victory over all disturbances as the fulfillment of his own nature and being.

Christ too, is a stimulation to human awakening; He is the Mediator in the sense of his influence abiding over the religious that they will approximate themselves to this typical or ideal example. According to Schleiermacher, the Church is nothing more than an ethico-religious fellowship and her purpose or function is to develop spiritual impulse (or religious capacity) in man. This religious structure in humanity is to be incorporated into a world-fellowship by the mission of Christianity.

But Brunner and Barth appear to us as corrective theologians, because they attack the secular liberalism of Schleiermacher which ^{reduces} degenerates theology into anthropology in which the Church of Christ is degraded into a mere religious club. They oppose it because they can only see the plain self-destruction of the Protestant faith by this harmful liberalism which hands over the task of theology to philosophy and so involves a seriously variant approach. We have seen that their theological thought is then directly oriented to the opposite of this liberalistic Modernism: they think that they must replace Schleiermacher's immanent religionism with the Word of God; and the

subjective religious experience with the objective reality of revelation. In the relation between God and man, God is always first, man second; for the unconditional priority belongs to God, not to man. They must, therefore, explain that in this relation our religious experience is not an essential necessity but a factual one.

Taking seriously the qualitative difference between the Creator and the creaturely, they affirm that God is the Creator-Lord. His sovereign lordship over nature is incomparable with, or transcends the creaturely of the world-whole. Therefore, God Himself is the absolute mystery. It is God who reveals Himself in Christ and this fact constitutes Christian faith. The fundamental concern of revelation is God's condescension to man. One must know that the original nature of Christian faith is not an individual's own achievement. The self-revelation of God to man is the key to understand Brunner's and Barth's theology. The Word of God in revelation is truth in itself---the Truth of all truths, and it is entirely independent of any human norm of truth. Therefore, the criterion of dogmatics is only to be found in this Word of God and not in the general truth of universal humanity; Christian theology must not be grounded on a rational knowledge but on this revelation of God in His Word. According to Brunner and Barth, faith actually means a response to the Word of God which demands man's obedience; therefore, the knowledge of faith means acknowledgment. They see that salvation is a movement from above; it is a movement to the world and not from the world. Brunner and Barth constantly assert and strenuously maintain that revelation is God's free act, and absolute freedom belongs to God and God alone. man must not attempt to solve the mystery of revelation: The true or particular meaning of revelation is not to be generalized by an exhaustive explanation of an uninspired

rationalistic approach; neither should its original ideas be represented by any scientific expression of empirical effort nor imagined by any eternal principle of immanent mysticism. The mystery of revelation as God's gracious act is not to be comprehended directly by a naïve self-interpretation of man, and so the super-dimension of Christian life must not be violated by the humanization of life from the ethico-religious standpoint. All the idealistic or optimistic notions applied to interpret the advancement of the Church from the point of view of human potentiality is most confusing with the genuine Christian outlook of salvation and thus even the Christian hope of the coming redemption in Saving-history is diluted. Therefore, according to Brunner and Barth, the revelation of Christian faith must replace the universal human possibility in religious experience.

Having summarized their different theological positions above, we must now develop their diverse points of departure. We have noted that the philosophical Schleiermacher distinguished religion from knowledge and will, that is to say that religion is not to be identified as philosophy or ethics. Thus man is regarded originally as religious; religion being of human nature and so on. Is Schleiermacher consistent in this view? No, we may quote one example to illustrate his inconsistency, for we have found that the semi-theological Schleiermacher constantly emphasized a working Christianity. In this respect, he essentially agreed with Kant's ethical principle of the Categorical Imperative; and as we have seen he decisively emphasized the ethical aspect of religion in his quest of the ideal. As Dilthey says: "The Church is nothing other than a human fellowship which realizes in herself the idea and the task of mankind in virtue of an ethical process."² Therefore,

2. Dilthey. "Die Kirche ist nichts anderes als die

shall we say, that Schleiermacher absolutely contradicts what he denounces in his Speeches. But, our estimate of him must not be too confident and over-simplified, for Schleiermacher's position is not only, as we have seen, central and unique, but in the meanwhile, we recall that he wrote the letter to Lücke about his Glaubenslehre and explained that his dogmatics is but a reflection of religious piety, otherwise there would not be dogmatics and so on: "I, on my part, know nothing of such ideas [out of which piety should arise] and even less of the proofs of the same, and not at all where a dogmatic should come from, if piety was not there first."³ Therefore, we actually cannot judge whether it is a real contradiction? Thus, eventually, it would be best for us to leave this question open. From here we turn to the question of whether Barth's denunciation of his dogmatic method---a method whose basis certainly involves a sort of psychological approach, psychologism---is legitimate. According to what we have described in the above, we can only affirm this denunciation in the positive.

Actually when we trace back Schleiermacher's theological thought, his first soteriology seems to be a philosophy of religion, his second one a semi-psychology of religion (semi-theological). Schleiermacher cannot escape from their criticism that his theology has an anthropocentric emphasis. It is right, therefore, to accuse him of explaining away the particular conception of revelation and faith; for if faith is not an invention

Gemeinschaft der Menschheit, welche in sich die Idee und Aufgabe der Menschheit vermöge des sittlichen Prozesses realisiert." op. cit., p.793.

3. Schleiermachers Sendschreiben (über seine Glaubenslehre) an Lücke, "Ich hingegen weiss gar nichts von solchen Ideen und noch weniger von Beweisen derselben, und überhaupt nichts, wo eine Dogmatik herkommen sollte, wenn nicht die Frömmigkeit schon da wäre." p.17.

or achievement but a gift, revelation is not a discovery but a mystery.

In fact, according to Schleiermacher, God is ultimately an empty concept; man is alone; his theology of psychologism is but a soliloquy. All these criticisms of him are most valid. If God is God, let Him be God! Schleiermacher cannot de-personalize Him into a God-idea or a vague Infinite. It is right that Barth denounces Schleiermacher's attitude, in his systematization of Christian doctrines, as a master or a complete virtuoso. Barth actually means that one should have an attitude of prayer when one comes to express these things so as to elaborate a theology and he should undertake this task as faithfully and humbly as a servant.⁴ One must not be too self-confident or so free in initiating, shaping, or systematizing and so on.

In order to be fair to Schleiermacher, we cannot conclude this point too much; we must constantly weigh our criticism of this great master so that it will not be, at bottom, "Unschleiermacherisch." In this connection, it may be as well to point out that it is strange to see that Schleiermacher never clearly defines his conception of feeling of absolute dependence. Brandt assumes that if he clearly explained it, the importance of his theology would not have been so great for he says: "Had he carried through a rigorous analysis of his concepts of 'feeling' and religious experience, it is quite possible that the idea would have proved less powerful."⁵ Therefore, we can see that Schleiermacher too, knows where to stop even he takes up this most defensible position which negatively means his advantage of

4. Dogmatics in Outline, p.11.

5. Brandt, The Philosophy of Schleiermacher, (The Development of His Theory of Scientific and Religious Knowledge) New York and London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941. p.313.

being vague, elastic or plastic and adaptable.⁶

Is it not true that Schleiermacher's concepts of God and feeling are actually illusory? It is, according to him, impossible to define them even if they have any objective content at all they will be explained away by him. That is why Schleiermacher does not even attempt to further explain these---God and feeling. But from here Schleiermacher turned to the nature of the world-whole. He knows that he cannot afford to miss the clue in this marvelous magnificence, and he applies his conception of nature as the contents of his propositions of faith in God and in one's feeling. His doctrine of the world-whole is important to him. Without it, his concepts of God and feeling both would go void. In fact, according to Schleiermacher, the concept of the world-whole is the true mediator between the divine and the human. It is right to criticize him for deifying the creature on one hand and secularizing Christianity (or humanizing of spiritual life) on the other. One must know that Schleiermacher is actually being pressed into this kind of illusion; after all, what can he do since he possessed such empty concepts of God and feeling?

Schleiermacher's philosophy of religion or his semi-psychology of religion or even the combination of both is void of content. It bears evidence that human attempts and human efforts to systematize or initiate these things which he thought could be traced back to God---an impossibility---eventually prove vain. As Brunner calls it: "It is faith without a foundation."⁷ It is clearly seen that Schleiermacher is forced to combine or identify the order of nature with the work of God in order to make something out of this emptiness. If one considers

6. cf. Loc. cit.

7. The Mediator, p.37.

that he is so naïve and exaggerates the potentiality of man, something for which Brunner and Barth criticized him, he has no choice here. This mistake is due to his erroneous position which he has taken from the beginning---man as centre. Is it not true that his position causes him these inevitable results in his expositions: when he explains things about man, they all become identifiable truths to him; but when he elaborates things about God, they all become gradually or eccentrically vague. Therefore, all that is left for him is the world and the way of conceiving it, i.e., the self-consciousness!

One question may be asked, does Schleiermacher shift this position as it has been discussed above? We have learned that Barth criticizes the unsatisfactoriness of his teaching which provides "no shift of emphasis from teaching to listening." Schleiermacher does alter his interpretation, at least, from the approach of a philosophical one to a psychological (somewhat one-sidedly Christian or semi-theological) one. His mistake is that he does not emphasize the freedom of God. According to him, God is purely immanent in his first soteriology and God is epistemologically transcendent in his second soteriology, therefore, he prefers to keep silent about Him. Thus, it is seen that Schleiermacher has shifted his approach, but he has not altered his position; man is still the centre of All. Had Schleiermacher altered his position from man as centre to God as centre, then all their criticism of him would have become immediately invalid. However, Schleiermacher has failed to do this, therefore, he must take the responsibility of humanizing the Christian life.

Schleiermacher's mistake in filling in his empty concepts is magnified in his conception of grace and sin. We have found that he tries to work out two opposite concepts as interesting contents in the process of cultural progress. But it does not work out according to his purpose. Perhaps he originally means

to decorate his monotonous exposition of human development. In fact, it works out to an opposite result; it magnifies its emptiness. Barth's criticism of his theory in this respect is thorough: nothing is affirmed as real and nothing is negated for they exhaust each other by his sound theory of co-relation and co-ordination and he does not interpret this in terms of history and does not understand that man is a covenant-partner of God. Here it may be seen that Barth handles the one and the same thing but in a right way: actually Schleiermacher ascribes the process of reconciliation to a religious mind and applies this process in an optimistic way to the future; Barth ascribes this process of reconciliation to the historical revelation and applies this process to the historical fact of the terrible crucifixion happened once and for all in the past. For we have seen that Schleiermacher's theory in this respect is intended first to divide, secondly to reconcile. He has forgotten⁸ the place of Jesus Christ who is the true Reconciler when he speaks of these things of spiritual magnitude such as grace and sin. Jesus Christ is the one who bears this contradiction of sin and grace. In connection with Schleiermacher's non-Christian view of Christ, the inevitable result is that his theory is seriously caught in this contradiction which eventually cancels his theory itself. One can see how the attempt of human theory to usurp the divine place is unsuccessful. Brunner cannot discover this mistake of Schleiermacher for he constantly criticizes Schleiermacher's psychological approach in his doctrine of sin. In fact, it seems that he even invites Schleiermacher to exaggerate his magnifying method for his empty

8. cf. Supra, pp.200ff. In fact, Schleiermacher prefers to have the doctrine of sin preceded his Christology; Brunner and Barth, undeniably, inverse this order to first Christology, then the doctrine of sin.

conception here. This unconscious error in Brunner is again due to his direct reaction to Schleiermacher's theory of relativism which he feels too defective to interpret or represent the Christian antithesis of absolute character (cf. Supra, p.200.). It is because Brunner does not realize Schleiermacher's effort to escape from the region of abstraction, that he criticizes his relativistic view which implies a hidden unity of continuity. Therefore, Brunner, seen as an expert in immediate opposition to Schleiermacher (as he says: replaces the "not-yet" by the "no-longer"), invites him to extend his illusory theory, because he has failed to take into consideration Schleiermacher's conception which serves to magnify his empty movement of thought. Barth acutely points out that Schleiermacher's theory is rendering a very incredible service.

However, in spite of Schleiermacher's weak spots caught by Brunner and Barth, the principal question concerning their different theological positions may be asked. If Brunner and Barth can determinatively emphasize the super-freedom of God because their theology is theocentric; then, why does Schleiermacher not have such a similar freedom to emphasize the freedom of man because his theology is anthropocentric? For we have learned, on a closer examination, there is no contradiction in Brunner's and Barth's doctrines of God because according to them, God is the centre of their interpretation. Therefore, on the same and equal basis, it seems that there should not be any contradiction in Schleiermacher's theories on his humanization of life (human development), simply because, according to him, man is the centre of his interpretation. Is it not true that this is due to such a central and unique position? When this position is once adopted, all contradictions become identifications because they are all reconciled to the focus of this position. There is no wonder that Barth eventually

admits that it is impossible to criticize Schleiermacher adequately.⁹ Indeed, unless one takes up Schleiermacher's position, in which case he would have become his disciple, his circumscribed criticism can hardly be to the focus! Thus, it is thinkable that even Schleiermacher possesses half a dozen theories of salvation, strictly speaking, from the views of their starting-points, his position is still legitimate for putting forward of these theories. Therefore, Brunner's and Barth's criticism of his Christology against the background of his theological thought is invalid from Schleiermacher's point of view, but is correct from Brunner's and Barth's point of view. It may be argued that if this is so, then no criticism of any one can have more than an aesthetic value. But, is this not true to our human situation of life? In attempting to prove that this suggestion is right, the following situation could be assumed: if Schleiermacher were living amongst us to-day, he would also say to Brunner and Barth that they hold two or even more doctrines of God which are absolutely incompatible with each other, and that perhaps it would be better to have just one doctrine of God and so on. We have already seen how Barth criticized Schleiermacher's understanding of the identity of God's attributes as something single.¹⁰ That this kind of criticism hardly comes to the point is evident because each holds a different position and criticizes the other whose position is different from his. Therefore, in this section, one can see that it is right to criticize Schleiermacher for having chosen a wrong theological position, but it is wrong to criticize his right development of ideas from his points of departure without considering his defensible position which virtually reconciles all apparent inconsistencies.

9. cf. Die Protestantische Theologie, p.380.
 10. CD II/1. p.530.

2. The inner significance of Schleiermacher's theology evokes the disparate results in their critique, together with different emphases in Brunner and in Barth.

We have learned from both Schleiermacher's sermons and his theology of philosophical optimism on an ethical basis: man is both religious and social; culture is destined to be progressive; history has a purpose; everything works out towards good for everyone in the course of time and so on. As he preached:

In this new creation which the Spirit of God establishes in the hearts of men, and from which we more and more expect, as time goes on, a new heaven and a new earth to result, it might be supposed that all would go within right limits, and that the new earth would be distinguished mainly by this, that it should never again be the scene of ruin and devastation, though only in appearance; but that everything should progress in regular and successful order. 11

Again, we find what he wrote in the Christian faith: "In all gifts of the Spirit there is recognizable a definite basis in human nature, causing it inevitably to take the form it does, and throughout the entire development of the new man the kind and the degree of progress depends on the development of nature in the person concerned and on the character of his environment."¹² Even if this non-historical idealism is taken for granted as he believes it, he still has no right to assign the merit and credit for the mentality and morality of the natural man and thus encouraging his illusion and pride if the characteristic of the Gospel is fundamentally set "not in the imperative but in the indicative."¹³ How can man divide God's work

11. Nicoll, op. cit., p.219.

12. Christian Faith, p.583.

13. Baillie, Invitation to Pilgrimage, (Oxford University Press, London: Humphrey Milford, 1942). p.51.

of reconciliation and redemption by usurping the glory of God; or how can man forsake the Christian outlook by obscuring the original meaning of its witness of salvation;¹⁴ if he does not identify the divine message of the Gospel with the secular achievement of humanity. For we know that on one hand, the historical revelation is a unique event, as Brunner and Barth asserted, and on the other, culture and civilization actually may come and go such as to be replaced or abolished. Therefore, Brunner and Barth are right in criticizing Schleiermacher's naïve prophetic view of sanguine humanism which, at bottom, does not really understand the existing complexity of human nature. According to Brunner:

We are not dealing with historical positivism, but with something which does not lie within the possibilities of history at all; with an event which has broken through the surface of history, or, as Barth is fond of expressing it, with a vertical message from above. We do not deny, of course, that even the prophet 'word,' in which the Divine Word is plunged into the current of history is itself determined by history, and is manifested in a human and imperfect form; on the contrary, we recognize and affirm it. On this account, however, it still remains a 'word' from the region which lies beyond all historical possibilities, an authoritative word of revelation. 15

Brunner seems to insist that these two categories of history and word must not be combined. As we have discussed that a qualitative difference between them must be maintained. But we cannot forget that in this aspect Barth emphasizes more than Brunner that the Incarnation is an historical event although the revelation of God in Christ is originally a mystery. Therefore

14. Baillie points out that "their [modern men's] difficulty has been that of understanding how the climax of an upward process that is still going on could have come two thousand years ago..." *Ibid.*, p.89. cf. pp.90f.

15. The Mediator, pp.221f.

his point of contact is centralized in this event of revelation. As Barth says:

The reconciliation of man with God in Christ includes in itself or else begins with the fresh establishment of the lost 'point of contact.' This point of contact is, therefore, not real outside faith but only in faith. In faith a man is created by the Word of God for the Word of God, existing in the Word of God, not in himself, not in virtue of his humanity and personality, nor from the standpoint of creation, for what is possible from the standpoint of creation from man to God has actually been lost through the Fall. Thus this point of contact also, like everything becomes real in faith, i.e. through the grace of reconciliation, can only be spoken of theologically, and not theologically and philosophically. 16

When Barth speaks of man, he seems to admit a slight difference in thought from his original interpretation of the mystery of the Word. But he mediates his different standpoints by pointing to the fact of the divine reconciliation in Christ on one hand and our faith in this grace of reconciliation on the other. However, Brunner prefers to distinguish decisively the Word from history and affirms that this event of revelation is super-historical. As he says: "It is neither Idea nor History---just because it is the decisive event---but the unique (Einmalige) which, as such, cannot be part of history, but which means the judgment on and fulfillment of history."¹⁷ Actually Brunner and Barth both hold the same view that the Word of revelation is a vertical message from above; this perpendicular movement of salvation breaks through the horizontal plane of history. Owing to the fact that these two categories (history and Word) are qualitatively different from each other, Brunner and Barth think that they have to explain the conception of a point of contact:

16. CD I/1. pp.273f.

17. The Mediator, p.391.

Barth affirms this point of contact as possible and real only within the realm of faith and includes this point in the event of revelation; Brunner, on the contrary, does not relate this point of contact to this event as Barth does, but redound to the natural man his credit by establishing this point of contact in him as a possibility and relevancy to theology. We then can see clearly that both Brunner and Barth fundamentally hold the same conception that the Word of revelation intersects the horizontal plane of history. It may not be completely wrong to say that Brunner prefers to be consistent with human interpretation in virtue of this point of contact, which he elsewhere emphasizes, at the expense of the contradiction of his original ideas of revelation; Barth prefers to be consistent with his original interpretation of revelation at the expense of the disharmony in thought from his original emphasis on revelation as divine mystery. Brunner, in affirming this point of contact in man, is not altogether inconsistent in his interpretation of revelation, for we understand that he prefers to go farther from his discernment of the categories between history and word. Barth, in incorporating this point of contact in revelation, is not at all contradicting his emphasis on revelation as mystery, for we have seen that he prefers to include this point of contact in the divine grace of reconciliation.

Now let us turn in another direction and attempt to examine Brunner's thought which appears somewhat similar to Schleiermacher's: one can judge that if Schleiermacher's optimism concerning human development, for which he has been criticized, is non-historical,¹⁸ then Brunner's concept of revelation, as he has distinctly emphasized in the passage quoted above, seems also non-historical and, as we have already shown, his concept of the Kingdom of God is also non-optimistic but

originally super-optimistic: Christianity holds a more optimistic view than that of Idealism---for it possesses the hope of the eternal kingdom as the fulfilled redemption.¹⁹ Furthermore, if Schleiermacher's defective theory in his apprehension of the nature of sin is relativistic, e.g., more or less, weak or strong, lower or higher, capable or incapable, spiritual or sensuous (cf. Supra, p.199), then in Brunner's critique, we are surprised to find that his approach here is also originally relativistic and somewhat analogous to Schleiermacher's theory. For he also applies such relativistic notions as Creator and creature, sin and grace, election and rejection, wrath and reconciliation, salvation and non-salvation etc. in his analyses of the Christian antitheses (cf. Supra, p.200). Is his theological thought close enough to Schleiermacher's? Or, according to the above discussion concerning the point of contact, is Barth's theological thought genuinely christocentric? Here is another piece of evidence which one can judge for oneself.

We must turn back to the unfinished question of why Brunner's theological thought appears somewhat similar to Schleiermacher's? This is because Brunner so constantly and directly reacts to him that his thought-form is vitally influenced by Schleiermacher. As we know, as far as reaction to action is concerned, it itself is an action, that is to say that unless one has to penetrate one's understanding more deeply, it is inevitably involved in the same level of thought. Particularly when we are dealing with a man such as Schleiermacher, let us remember what Barth says of him: he is a man very much like us. Thus, it is simple enough that the involvement is great and one is easily caught into this current of action-reaction. To this

18. cf. Brunner's criticism of Schleiermacher's clear-cut view of history. Mystik, p.296.

19. The Mediator, p.614.

extent, Barth's comment on this is right. This judgment, that Brunner's background of theological thought is involved in this reaction, from the rational point of view, is not fictitious, Baillie says: "argument cannot begin except from some major premise the truth of which is acknowledged by both parties."²⁰ Since we know that the argument of Brunner against Schleiermacher in his book Mystik is great, thus the possible common basis which lies between him and Schleiermacher, should undoubtedly be wide. We also notice that an even more prominent or similar situation happened between Brunner and Barth. No one can deny that their theological ideas are close enough to each other, but when Barth issues his "Nein!" Its expression is severe!

We ourselves do not ignore the fact that there is a difference between Brunner's and Barth's theology: Brunner holds that man even in his perverted existence, is still man, not animal,²¹ and that a face-to-face relationship between God and man must not be denied; that he is a sinner who sins against God and also compromises his own existence because he is still the Creator-Lord's creature-man, otherwise the real contradiction is not even possible.²² Barth certainly will not deny this fact that man as covenant-partner of God, rebels against God's grace. Even as a sinner, he sins against God and this negative relationship between God and man exists, but he seems not to argue from this point whether a sinner is able to compromise his own existence or not, since the argument is based on the natural man's point of view. For he questions the possible process of co-operation in the work of redemption, even in realizing man's own

20. Invitation to Pilgrimage, p.8.

21. Natur und Gnade, (Zum Gespräch mit Karl Barth), Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1934. p.10.

22. Loc. cit.

need of being saved. Brunner insists however that this point is possible and necessary, otherwise it would not even be relevant to theology,²³ and from the dialectical point of view, as he asserts, revelation and salvation are even impossible.²⁴ Therefore, a point of contact is presupposed to be valid.²⁵ This point of contact, interpreted in this sense, is nonsense to Barth: for he holds when a person is drowning, it is not worth while to count his struggling in the water, even though he is able to swim one or two proper strokes while he is struggling. If he is drowning, he is in danger, and all he needs is to be saved.²⁶ But, according to Brunner, if Barth denies even this limited natural theology, then his theology is non-Biblically exalted²⁷ and wholly irrational, therefore, the whole theological situation is possibly nonsense! For Brunner argues: "As if we too were not aware that God the Creator upholds all things by His power, that He has set the stamp of His divinity on the world and created man to be His own image!"²⁸ This is roughly the most comprehensive point of their opposition to each other: one prefers to set out this point of contact from the natural man; the other thinks that it is not worth while to argue from this point. The reason for pointing this out is possibly to throw light on the difference in their critique of Schleiermacher: Brunner's position is this that he accepts human reason

23. Man in Revolt, pp.512ff.

24. Brunner: "Nur dass Gott urbildliches, der Mensch abbildliches Subjekt ist. Er hört auch als Sünder nicht auf, einer zu sein, mit dem man reden kann, mit dem auch Gott reden kann." Natur und Gnade, p.10. Man in Revolt, pp.514f.

25. Natur und Gnade, p.18.

26. Nein! (Antwort an Emil Brunner), Theologisches Existenz Heute, Heft 14, Chr. Kaiser Verlag - München, 1934, pp.16f.

27. Divine-Human Encounter, p.41.

28. The Word and the World, p.7.

as part of the capacity for revelation, but, to Barth, revelation is absolutely God's grace,²⁹ no scholastic bargain can be made here, but it is clear and decisive, final and definite. As Camfield puts it: "Revelation could not speak to man on his own ground...It could not permit natural theology of any kind to share in the work which a theology of revelation alone could accomplish."³⁰ From the point of view of their theological opposition, it could be suggested that Brunner would look at the things or explain the situations in the way they appear to him. Undoubtedly he is fond of emphasizing revelation in creation.³¹ And Barth would believe or look into the things or situations beyond their appearance. We have seen that for which Brunner actually criticizes Schleiermacher most is his method and the content, no doubt, Schleiermacher is a mystic to him. Barth criticizes Schleiermacher for his motive for putting forward such a method and content. According to Barth, Schleiermacher's theology should be termed "the religion of culture," rather than "mysticism."³² Certainly Barth does not completely deny that Schleiermacher's philosophical theology is somewhat mystical,³³ however, perhaps this is not Schleiermacher's original intention, but his age turns him or his thought in this direction; since he is deeply influenced by the thought-form of his age or seriously involved in its movements, or bound up with his contemporaries otherwise Schleiermacher would not be a mystic; and perhaps he

29. "Wir müssen es wieder lernen, die Offenbarung als Gnade und die Gnade als Offenbarung zu verstehen..." Nein! p.8.

30. Development and Present Stage of the Theology of Karl Barth, Reformation Old and New, p.22.

31. Brunner, Revelation and Reason, p.78.

32. Barth, Brunners Schleiermacherbuch, Zwischen den Zeiten, (Herausgegeben von Georg Merz) Heft VIII. Chr. Kaiser Verlag München, 1924, p.56.

33. cf. CD I/1. p.371.

is irrelevant to this category,³⁴ if it is thinkable that the Schleiermacher with the influence of his age is different from the Schleiermacher without the influence of his age. For Barth questions this: "If it were right to reduce the whole theology of Schleiermacher to the one formula 'mysticism', on which the anti-critics should now fall, then I would not really understand how was it possible that a whole century could live theologically from this heritage?"³⁵ Therefore, according to Barth, Brunner is unjust to Schleiermacher³⁶ or too confident of his own critique of him. This review of Barth seems correct, for Brunner did not take care enough that Schleiermacher speaks as an apologist.³⁷ Brunner has actually discovered Schleiermacher's inconsistency in his sermons in relation to his theology, but he thinks that his sermons should not be used for judging his true theological thought. Perhaps Brunner is not completely ignorant of Schleiermacher who lives in an eventful age? But, according to Barth, just because Schleiermacher's time is eventful, therefore, sermons should be considered. Which is which? Brandt points out that "Dilthey and Ritschl (Otto) claim that it is the sermon which represents Schleiermacher's personal views."³⁸ However, the writer would like to call the reader's attention to the biographical sketch prefixed to the Selected Sermons of Schleiermacher, in which we find that, Schleiermacher's sermons were

34. Barth: "Warum gleich die anklägerische Überschrift 'Die Mystik und das Wort'? Warum nicht ganz trocken: 'Schleiermacher'? Brunners Schleiermacherbuch, Zwischen den Zeiten, p.55. cf. p.56.

35. "Wenn es richtig wäre, die ganze Theologie Schleiermachers auf die eine Formel 'Mystik' zu bringen, auf die sich die Anti-Kritiker nun stürzen werden, so verstünde ich wirklich auch nicht recht, wie es möglich war, dass ein ganzes Jahrhundert theologisch von diesem Erbe leben konnte." Ibid., p.56.

36. Ibid., p.54.

37. Ibid., p.56.

38. The Philosophy of Schleiermacher, p.104.

later edited by someone else from the notes taken at different times. It is said that Schleiermacher himself could never have written his sermons before he preached:

It has already been said that Schleiermacher considered all sermons, and his own more especially, as intended only to be heard, not read. The specialty in his own case arose from the fact that his sermons were never written; all his published discourses being printed from notes taken during delivery. They were very deeply thought out; but a few very brief notes were all that he committed to paper; leaving his already well-defined thoughts to take shape as his feelings warmed with his theme and took a special tone from the sympathetic reflex influence of the people assembled before him. 39

Since Schleiermacher's sermons are not his original personal writings such as the Speeches or the Christian Faith, the work of a careful elaboration of his thought, the whole issue herein discussed seems essentially vague. Nevertheless, the writer will suppose that Schleiermacher's emphasis on a working Christianity (in the Christian Faith) is close to the conception of his sermons. His philosophy of religion in the Speeches has a romantic flavour and is, in some respects, different from the thought of his Christian Faith. But all (including his philosophy of religion in the Speeches, the Christian Faith, and his sermons) are spoken with an apologetic motive. Since Brunner is fond of criticizing Schleiermacher's philosophy of religion and has a bias against Schleiermacher's semi-theological approach in his Christian Faith, there is no doubt why he does not consider Schleiermacher's sermons.

In pursuing this line of thought, we may now say that Brunner is criticizing Schleiermacher's theology (or more exact, his philosophy of religion); Barth criticizes Schleiermacher's theology (or his philosophy of religion and his semi-psychology of religion) and Schleiermacher himself. Actually Brunner's

39. Nicoll, op. cit., pp.26f.

critique is more consistent and logical than Barth's; Barth's critique is more to the point than Brunner's. Since Schleiermacher, apart from his own view, is not consistent from the outset, therefore, Barth's critique is not inflexible. Thus, going one step further, we may venture to say that Brunner not only has discovered Schleiermacher's inconsistency in his sermons when related to his theology, but also in his philosophical emphasis at his earlier period and his semi-psychological emphasis at his later period. But Brunner prefers to get hold of one and let go the other. Should it be said that Brunner criticizes more Schleiermacher's Speeches than his Glaubenslehre? Brunner holds fast to Schleiermacher's philosophical approach, but tends to skip over his semi-theological attempt (semi-psychological) of interpretation even he revised this respect of his criticism in the second edition of his book Mystik. It seems that Brunner does not really revise his criticism of Schleiermacher in this edition, for he constantly complains of Schleiermacher's philosophical and religious (psychological) approach to Christian faith;⁴⁰ but implicitly revises his attitude towards Schleiermacher in his later writings rather than to change his standpoints of criticism after Barth's article on his book. It seems that in The Mediator, and The Divine Imperative, Brunner thinks that it would be better to operate more strictly with Schleiermacher's thought-form and thus widen his dialectical approach to theology,⁴¹ in order to avoid this attack by Barth. If this hypothesis that Brunner has widened his theological basis is actually true, then, it may reflect that Brunner's thought is originally not deep or perhaps its range is not wide at all. One may even notice in his critique the way he puts it---as if there were only two sides in a predicament,

40. cf. Mystik, pp.324ff.

41. cf. The Mediator, pp.502ff.

viz., Either-Or. We have seen how Barth quoted a sentence from his book: "Either the Christian faith or the modern concept of religion."⁴² On the other hand, we have also learned how von Balthasar had pointed out that in one way or another, his background of thought is vitally influenced by Schleiermacher.⁴³ This evaluation of him is perhaps just. Brunner's exaggerated attitude towards Schleiermacher seems nonsense. For example, one may even ask who also adopts a similar transcendental system? In this respect, even Barth⁴⁴ is also partly inspired by this system. Or one may even ask who stimulates their theological thought? Without Schleiermacher's stimulation of thought, directly or indirectly, consciously or sub-consciously, it is imaginable that both Brunner's and Barth's writings, at least would not be so bulky in form and that they would not be so rich in thought, and deep and wide in the range of thought. Instead of unreservedly recognizing this merit of Schleiermacher; or even properly emphasizing his credit in this respect, they straightforwardly criticize him. Their criticism is all right, but their severe renunciation of the whole content of his thought is questionable. Actually their critique, taken as a whole, seems unjust. We should be reminded how von Balthasar has pointed out the importance of Schleiermacher's influence upon Barth: "From Schleiermacher Barth arises; at the time of his [Barth's] theological training, Schleiermacher gave him his conceptual tools, [and] even more, a tremendous intuition into the

42. "Entweder der christliche Glaube oder die moderne Religionsauffassung." Brunners Schleiermacherbuch, Zwischen den Zeiten, p.61.

43. Karl Barth, Darstellung und Deutung seiner Theologie, p.211.

44. In this connection, it even remotely reflects the fact that a comparison is to be made here: who says that religion and music are twins? And who is a great theologian and has the greatest passion for Mozart?

unity, magnitude, (and) totality of theological science."⁴⁵ He also points out the inner significance of Schleiermacher's influence upon Brunner: "On the surface, Brunner launches his attack against mysticism from the basis of eschatology, but at bottom, he speaks from the basis of religious personalism which gives Brunner his decisive categories, and from there he attacks the transcendental systematics of the great idealist."⁴⁶ In fact, if the present writer should be permitted to express his personal opinion, Schleiermacher's theology, no matter how defective his views are, permanently represents general (or one-sided) truth. As far as theology, or more exact, theology of revelation, is elaborated by man, not by spiritual beings, Schleiermacher has his own value; as far as theology expressed in the form of human language, not any language of heaven (if there is any, as the Arabs claim their own), Schleiermacher's value in this respect is permanent. They can so easily disagree with Schleiermacher, indeed, everyone can disagree with every other one; but here, if we may be allowed to put it this way, Schleiermacher more or less, seems to represent the human expression of divine truth. The writer thinks that if Schleiermacher lived in this time, it is certain that it would be very interesting to see what he would say (or at least those who sympathize with Schleiermacher's position should defend him)

45. "Von Schleiermacher kommt Barth her; Schleiermacher hat ihm in seiner theologischen Bildungszeit das begriffliche Rüstzeug geliefert, ja viel mehr noch: eine gewaltige Intuition in die Einheit, Grösse, Totalität der theologischen Wissenschaft." Karl Barth, Darstellung und Deutung seiner Theologie, pp.210f.

46. "Vordergründig trägt Brunner seinen Angriff gegen die Mystik von der Eschatologie her vor, aber im Hintergrund spricht er vom religiösen Personalismus her, der Brunner seine entscheidenden Kategorien liefert, und greift von da aus die transzendente Systematik des grossen Idealisten an."
Loc. cit.

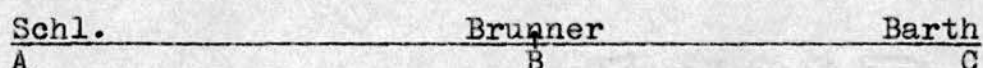
about Brunner and Barth. It is imaginable that in one way or another, Schleiermacher would say to them: well, you emphasize time and eternity which is qualitatively different, I won't argue with you from that point, but I shall say that this is the way of losing the meaning^{of} salvation; this is the true and genuine method of diluting the original and proper content of redemption. Well, you accuse me of inhuman basis (in Barth's critique⁴⁷) while talking about human things, as far as I can see, you are talking about yourself, not me, because I constantly emphasize this side. It is you who point to eternity (applied to Brunner's and Barth's critique). You turn my mysticism (in Brunner's critique) inside out to mystery of revelation and its outside in for your interpretation of faith in it. I tell you that I am honest that I don't know the realm of eternity, but I surely know that everyone has this life to live. Is that possible for a man who has fantastic passion for a square circle? Is it not true that even Confucius told us some 2500 years ago that "one does not even know this life, how does he know the life hereafter." (未知生焉知死) You complain that I have totally shaded out this super-dimension of life. Yes, indeed, because I do not know, and I don't even attempt to know it. I am seeking truth, not illusory fantasy. Truth is always true to me, therefore it is easy to identify, but to you, it is just the inverse case, indeed, my sincere opinion becomes nonsense and naïve to your perverted understanding of yourselves and of my conception.

This, again, will fall seriously into a one-sided difficulty of the incomplete truth. We need not repeat the whole situation which we have already discussed in this thesis. Therefore, it is quite suggestive to read Barth's theology together

47. CD II/2. p.553.

with Schleiermacher's, and, in order to understand their theology better, it is important to seek help from Brunner for his theology neither appears as deep or pure as Barth's nor as shallow⁴⁸ or secular as Schleiermacher's.

Actually the three differences of their theology between Schleiermacher and Brunner, Brunner and Barth, Barth and Schleiermacher could be arranged in a straight line like this:



When Brunner sometimes explains that Barth's view and his are essentially the same, he means the section AB in the straight-line ABC. When Barth denies that Brunner holds the same as he does, he actually means the section BC. In this analysis of their relation to one another, we can see how Schleiermacher and Barth stand on the extreme ends of the pole with Brunner in the middle: that is to say that Schleiermacher's conception of the feeling of absolute dependence is parallel to Barth's the Word of God; and again, it is parallel to Brunner's amalgamation of the Word of God and the point of contact. Furthermore, Schleiermacher's contemplation of the universe is parallel to Barth's faith in the revelation of God in Christ; and it is, once again, parallel to Brunner's combination of faith in the revelation of God in Christ and in the manifestation of God's will in creation. Should Barth actually be thankful for Brunner's further exposition for the concept of revelation? Perhaps Barth himself would

48. Brandt, op. cit., p.322. As Hegel thus evaluates Schleiermacher's Glaubenslehre.

have explained the matter more, if Brunner had not done it. Since Brunner has done this, he thinks that he had better carry his concept further and let Brunner explain it for him. Brunner's thought, even back to his earlier period, in one way or another, has been, more or less, captured by Schleiermacher, and in addition to that, by Barth at his later period. Brunner himself perhaps is not aware of this: in a negative way he explains both for Schleiermacher and Barth.⁴⁹ Is it not true that Brunner's exposition of the point of contact as relevant to theology quietly suggests Schleiermacher's legitimacy for putting forward his key to Christian faith, i.e., feeling of absolute dependence. This feeling is really analogous to his point of contact. It might be argued that the Anknüpfungspunkt is not a commonplace, but relevant for theology. If it were not possible, how would it be relevant? But one must take notice that Schleiermacher's feeling is one of absolute dependence. If it were not dependent upon the Absolute, how would it be absolute dependence? Turning to the other direction, we note how Brunner's interpretation of revelation in creation as general revelation helps to explain the conception that God is a true and free Lord. He is free from any limited ideas of Christian revelation such as being defined in historical revelation in Jesus Christ (as Barth holds). But out of the mystery of His absolute freedom, He could reveal Himself once and for all in Jesus Christ as well as manifest Himself in creation. If Barth truly holds the same view as Brunner (apparently he does), that God is the absolutely free Lord, he should agree with Brunner here. In that case, Brunner's concept herein discussed really serves to supplement Barth's ideas of revelation. Barth certainly will not deny the omnicausality of God as the only true possibility in this created world.

49. In one way or another, when Brunner opposes Schleiermacher he unwittingly joins ranks with Barth and vice versa, when he opposes Barth.

But he has left it out without attempting to explain it and his attitude toward this is that he takes it too much for granted and not thinking it worth while to emphasize or to carry on such a discussion from a secular or pagan point of view. Brunner is certainly a typical professor of this century (Schleiermacher is the typical theologian of the 19th C, and Barth of our time). Brunner's mistake is due to the unstable position he adopts: for while positively opposing Schleiermacher he negatively explains Barth, likewise, explaining Schleiermacher when he opposes Barth. This, of course, is due to his method of direct reaction to his opponents. It is no wonder that Barth criticizes him wrestling with Schleiermacher as if he were his contemporary,⁵⁰ and not conscious of the fact that all theology will become historical theology in due course. Owing to the historical limitation of the existence of the Church, Barth does not hesitate to point this out: "Dogmatics will always be able to fulfill its task only in accordance with the state of the Church at different times."⁵¹ This is already true of Schleiermacher's theology.⁵² Brunner's theology cannot escape this fate; similarly, Barth also realizes this fact about his own theology. When the world is fully come of age, the irrelevancy of Barth's theology will grow. Barth admits this destined possibility and he has reserved room for future theological generations to say the things better:

Even dogmatics with the best knowledge and conscience can do no more than question after the better, and never forget that we are succeeded by other, later men; and he who is faithful in this task will hope that those other, later men may think and say better and more profoundly what we were endeavouring to think and say. ⁵³

p.55; 50. Brunners Schleiermacherbuch, Zwischen den Zeiten, pp.51f.

51. Dogmatics in Outline, p.11.

p.52. 52. Brunners Schleiermacherbuch, Zwischen den Zeiten,

53. Dogmatics in Outline, p.11.

Of course, actually what Barth means is that they say the things more relevant to their times.

Thus we may conclude that although in their critique, Brunner's theological thought as he so emphatically affirmed is in contrast to Schleiermacher's, yet, on a closer examination we find that, as far as his thought-form is concerned, this is not the case. Barth's attitude is rather moderate to Schleiermacher's thought and particularly sympathetic to his historical position, yet, his own theological thought, as far as his thought-content is concerned, is ultimately far more different or diametrically opposite to that of Schleiermacher. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that although their theology in relation to Schleiermacher's, is reactionary and corrective, yet, Brunner oftentimes directly reacts to Schleiermacher, as we have seen how he asserted his own reflection: "One must reverse this form [of Christian thinking] word for word to its direct opposite, in order to arrive at the evangelical [Protestant] knowledge of the Heavenly Kingdom."⁵⁴ Therefore, the result of his theological thought is largely similar to Schleiermacher in thought-form but contrary in thought-content. Barth soberly knows that theologians, when they set forth to elaborate a theology, must inevitably operate with Schleiermacher's thought-form which is fundamental and characteristic to a modern man⁵⁵ living in a scientific age. Therefore, he does not directly react to Schleiermacher, but his theology is largely corrective to his in thought-content.

Finally, it is correct to say that Brunner's critique of Schleiermacher's theology is comparatively consistent but somewhat "Unschleiermacherisch." For we have seen that his

54. cf. Supra, p.276.

55. Die Protestantische Theologie, p.380.

critique, in the main, is logical, having chosen a single point such as "mysticism" as the only object of his criticism. But, according to Barth, if Schleiermacher speaks as an apologist of his time, then surely Brunner's critique might involve an "Unschleiermacherisch" approach, for he has left out this aspect in his critique. Barth's critique is somewhat inconsistent but more to the point. For we know from the outset, that Barth does not regard Schleiermacher as a good theologian, and above all, he points out that Schleiermacher's interpretation of religion is not in the least Christian religion.⁵⁶ But we cannot forget that he also assures us that "however grave the question one would therefore have to ask, one has unreservedly to take into account that Schleiermacher was yet a Christian theologian."⁵⁷ With Barth's more penetrating insight in his critique, he seems to have involved himself in inconsistency which is not only due to his taking Schleiermacher into consideration as a Christian theologian and a philosopher of religion, but also due to his emphasis that Schleiermacher speaks as an apologist. One must be reminded, how Barth taking a full account of Schleiermacher, presents him as a versatile person: being a modern man, a thinker, moralist, philosopher of religion, philosophical theologian, apologist, and finally dogmatician.⁵⁸ Certainly, Barth criticizes Schleiermacher, considering that he lived in the 19th Century and became a victim to his eventful days. But he himself has forgotten how to unify his various standpoints of criticism of this great theologian in a more logical approach. One must yet remember that Barth's statement about criticizing Schleiermacher is final for he admits that it is extremely difficult to criticize him; he is a man very much like us.⁵⁹

56. The Word of God and the Word of Man, pp.195f.

57. cf. Supra, p.115.

58. Die Protestantische Theologie, p.397.

59. Ibid., p.380.

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